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NAME OF AUTHOR/*NOM DE L'AUTEUR* JESSE LOILANGISHO MOLLEL

TITLE OF THESIS/*TITRE DE LA THÈSE* TOWARDS A GENUINE AFRICAN THEATRE: TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN THE DRAMA OF PENINA MUHANDO.

UNIVERSITY/*UNIVERSITÉ* UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/ *GRADE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE* M. A

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/*ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE GRADE* 1979

NAME OF SUPERVISOR/*NOM DU DIRECTEUR DE THÈSE* DR. STEPHEN H. ARNOLD

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

TOWARDS A GENUINE AFRICAN THEATRE: TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN THE DRAMA OF PENINA MUHANDO

by

© Jesse L. Mollel

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
SPRING, 1979

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled TOWARDS A GENUINE AFRICAN THEATRE: TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN THE DRAMA OF PENINA MUHANDO

submitted by Jesse L. Mollel

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Stephen H. Arnold
Supervisor

James De Felice

Date March 14 1979

To my wife Obianuju, and
to Stephen and Carol

ABSTRACT

Primarily, this thesis is a study of Penina Muhando, a Tanzanian playwright, and an innovator who is attempting to steer away from the imported theatre that came with colonialism towards a genuine modern African (Tanzanian) theatre and drama based on indigenous traditions. The study is being conducted from an anti-colonial Afro-centric perspective.

Muhando's efforts are a reflection of the critical stand adopted by most independent African countries towards the colonial legacy left behind by the former colonizers. This stand is a result of the political and cultural nationalism that ushered in flag independence for African countries.

This development has been quite significant in the evolution of modern African theatre. Because of it, attempts to dislodge the colonial inspired theatre based on imitations of outmoded European models from which the majority of the indigenous population is alienated, have long begun. These attempts are ultimately aimed at replacing the colonial theatre with one that is indigenous in form and content, cultivated from local traditional and modern values. The objective is to have a popular, socially relevant and richly diverse theatre. Theatre artists across the continent have applied themselves in creative research and experimentation in pursuit of such a theatre, i.e. a genuine non-colonial theatre. Critics, too, have contributed by stimulating discussions of vital questions concerning the current state and the future of African theatre.

Muhando's plays and theoretical writings on African theatre have marked her out as one of the younger pioneers of modern theatre in Africa, theatre that is meaningful and fulfilling for Tanzanian masses. Yet, in spite of her significant contributions, little has been written on her or on her drama. This is hardly surprising considering the way Tanzanian drama and literature have been neglected by scholars, despite Tanzania's efforts to achieve cultural self-reliance by ridding its artistic culture of the colonial legacy.

This thesis intends to lift this veil of obscurity and to provide a critical profile of Penina Muhando through a comprehensive analysis of her drama, and through an assessment of her contributions to the aesthetics of modern African theatre, focussing on her use of indigenous traditional culture for experimentation and innovation.

Since such a study will not be complete without relating Penina Muhando to the question of how to attain a genuine African theatre and the problems surrounding such a goal, it has been necessary to provide a theoretical background consisting of a critical examination of modern African theatre and of theatre in East Africa focussing on Tanzania.

INTRODUCTION

In 1961, Tanzania won its independence from Britain. Since the post-independence period of the 60's began for the majority of the African countries, Tanzania has been going through a critical and transformational appraisal of its colonial cultural legacy, resulting from more than half a century of German and British rule. However, it was not until the 1967 Arusha Declaration[1] that genuine nationalistic endeavours, based on a heritage of almost a century of country-wide anti-colonial struggles, were inspired in many areas of cultural life.

Among these endeavours were several to displace the theatre imported within the colonial system, and encouraged by colonial cultural ideology and policies, an alien type of theatre which the masses have not been able to relate to and which has consisted of an odd, mediocre, conglomerate of plays and theatrical traditions from the closets of the "formidable" English heritage. Tossed to the colonised like crumbs to a beggar who had no choice, the plays deal with themes and values from a distant European cultural tradition which in the hands of the colonial theatre "artists" became a subjugating cultural weapon. Demas Nwoko's description of this type of theatre and its influence is illustrative:

> . . . Generally speaking, the young African's first intimation of theatre was at the mission school where simple Christian religious stories were dramatized and European folksongs and nursery rhymes recited in what were called "concerts." . . . In secondary grammar school we staged plays from European classics which were set books for language and literature studies . . . .It should be noted that at this stage the African child knew nothing of current trends in Western theatre, so his idea of the theatre was that of Medieval and Elizabethan Europe.[2] [emphasis mine]

Post-Arusha Declaration efforts to displace such enslaving theatre have also aimed at establishing, on the battled embers of the colonial theatre, a popular modern Tanzanian theatre that would enjoy indigenous inspiration in content and form.

Since 1967 the Department of Theatre Arts (recently renamed and reorganised as the Department of Art, Music and Theatre) at the national University, the University of Dar-es-Salaam, has been committed to various attempts to establish a trend of modern African theatre created from Tanzanian traditional and modern popular cultural life. Though these attempts have so far been frustrated by serious limitations, the objective is to create a culturally authentic theatrical medium that will reflect Tanzanian social problems, and partake in the education and development of the Tanzanian masses.

These attempts have taken various forms. Field research has been organised and carried out into the area of traditional peasant culture, especially in the study of artistic performances and activities containing theatrical elements such as song, dance, mime, and dramatic enactment. Several useful -- but inadequate and sparse--projects, seminars and workshops on playwrighting for African theatre have been held.

One of the more articulate and productive animators of this movement has been Penina Muhando. She has six plays to her credit, five published ones: Hatia (Guilt), Pambo (name of the principal character in the play), Heshima Yangu (My Dignity), Tambueni Haki Zetu (Recognize our Rights), and Talaka, Si Mke Wangu (You Are No Longer My Wife, I Divorce You), and an unpublished one: Harakati za Ukombozi (Liberation Struggles). This body of drama represents a significant response to the expectations that the Tanzanian masses have come to place on their artists, expectations that the Tanzanian artist must create art meaningful to the masses, instead of art pandering to the sensibilities of the former colonisers and their neo-colonial protégé-admirers in Tanzania.

Penina Muhando can be categorized as an evolving craftsman working, in a general direction, towards a decolonised modern African theatre, a task that is shared by several other theatre practitioners scattered across the continent. The campaign for decolonisation is being accompanied by a search for new theatrical media based on the invention of new theatrical language and new dramatic devices; in short, new theatrical experiences for African popular audiences are being sought.

Muhando enjoys both the pleasures and pains of stumbling in the undergrowth of experimentation. In the long run she has much to learn from such experimentation and so have we in our criticism of her. The search for new content and forms in her work offers substantial material for discussion and speculation about how drama can be used in the service of building decolonised culture. My thesis is therefore a study of the position she occupies as an experimental and pioneering dramatist.

There are two approaches necessary to employ when looking at the work of Penina Muhando. One is to look with sympathy and encouragement at the plays and the sentiments that have motivated her to write them. The other is to subject her work to genuine, rigorous criticism, identifying in them shortcomings that are an inevitable result of experimentation. These two approaches, separately stated for convenience, really combine in what we can call sympathetic criticism.

Too often, criticism of pioneering dramatists has been unduly unsympathetic, lacking in the kind of sensitivity necessary to perceive potential and positive values emerging from the work. For criticism to be truly constructive, it has to be motivated by a broad-mindedness that searches for emerging trends, instead of merely seeking to tear to tatters the specific plays under study. My study aims to identify and evaluate trends in Penina Muhando's works, besides providing textual analyses of them.

On the other hand, one cannot be liberal in the criticism of such drama, lavishing praise on it simply because it represents the still meagre positive side of African theatre. The road to a modern African theatre has been, since the beginning of the journey, marked with false starts, superficial experimentalism, wrong approaches, romantic mystifications, and a lack of complex understanding of African culture and a lack of sophistication in craftsmanship. Cognizance of these problems is a vital prerequisite for creating a modern African theatre meaningful to the masses. My discussion of the works embodies confrontation with these problems, because Penina Muhando is still very much a part of the legacy that has given rise to them.

Beginning with an examination of the broad historical and cultural context of Penina Muhando's theatrical activities, I go on to explore her relationship to that context, and finally to relate her work to some speculations about the future of theatre in Tanzania and Africa.

This study has been conducted from a rigorously Afro-centric perspective, one which encompasses the contexts of contemporary East African, Pan-African, and occasionally world theatre. To build up this vital perspective Chapter I begins with an examination of modern African theatre scene, its contemporary nature, orientation, and state of evolution. This will be done through a critical survey of representative criticism on African theatre, involving identification of two contrasting categories of criticism.

One category consists of the type of criticism that has presented negative views and conceptions of modern and traditional African theatre. Such criticism attempts to perpetuate the control of African theatre by bourgeois-colonial cultural ideologies, throwing African theatre into a cage containing an assortment of all kinds of man-eating theories. The theories range from those which distort, mystify, and falsely generalise about the definition and function of African theatre, to chauvinistic assertions that classify African theatre as "primitive" art, as they judge it from a Euro-centric point of view. Other criticism is characterised by the imperialistic assumption of Africa's subservience to Europe and the Western world. This type of criticism attempts to foster the belief that African theatre is a distant child of the European theatrical heritage. Significantly, such criticism emanates from foreign as well as from African scholars and artists. Examination of such criticism is necessary in our study of Penina Muhando because Tanzanian theatre and Muhando's drama are substantially prone to its intellectual influence.

For contrast, another category of criticism within Chapter I deals with a type of criticism that has attempted to redeem the concept and meaning of modern African theatre from the cesspool of negative criticism and to provide for it a meaningful future. This type of criticism is supplementary to positive efforts that are being devoted to the creation of meaningful theatre by dramatists like Penina Muhando, and is a good antidote to the negative criticism, opening up a wider understanding of African culture and art from an African perspective.

Chapter II reduces the field of examination from all Africa to more detailed examination of the background of theatre in East Africa. East Africa, Tanzania included (and Zambia for the purposes of this study), comprises a cultural unit with a relatively integrated past in the development and the current evolution of its modern theatre. The focus, however, will be on theatre in Tanzania. The general examination of East African theatrical scene, with the focus on Tanzania, will be done once more through a critical survey of articles and reviews that offer positive examples. This is a preparation for the eventual examination of theatre in Tanzania in its own light, with an emphasis on the struggle occurring today between the legacy of colonial theatre and the emerging national and non-colonial theatre. It needs to be mentioned that the general look at theatre in East Africa mainly serves as a comparative device, and is eventually channelled into an evaluation of the way forward taken by Tanzania in Drama and Theatre.

As for scholarship on Tanzanian drama (and East African for that matter), not much exists besides a few articles and reviews which merely examine a narrow range of aspects in an inconsequential manner. As Tanzanian drama deserves much more criticism than has been done of it, criticism of non-Tanzanian African drama plays an important part in illuminating Tanzanian positive efforts. It is significant that, among the critical material used in this chapter is also theoretical material by the playwright herself, i.e. papers and articles she has written as supplement to her practical work, and also critical material by her colleagues who have no doubt helped to stimulate her sentiments.

Chapter III introduces the playwright and the milieu she grew up and was educated in; it situates her against the background of the state of theatre in Tanzania when she took up writing for theatre, and analyses the problems and choices confronting her. A brief biography attempts to account for the organic attachment to African traditional sources evident in her drama. A discussion of her social, educational and artistic background follows, assessing her artistic involvement within, and gradual rejection of the legacy of colonial theatre. This is done in consistency with the wider frames of reference set in the preceding discussions about modern African theatre and Tanzanian theatre. Next I assess her commitment to create alternative directions for a specific national theatre, and to seek social change through it. This includes locating the basis for her commitment to artistic innovation and social change.

To round off the chapter, I discuss the general features of her drama as a whole, and present the detailed outline summaries of her plays, for preparation to launch into a comprehensive examination of them in Chapter IV.

Chapter IV is an intensive and comprehensive analysis of Muhando's plays. These are analysed from an Afro-centric point of view. The life, the characters, the situations, the themes in them are looked at from the point of view of African (Tanzanian) cultural idioms, symbols, and values. The plays have to be regarded as authentic products of Tanzanian cultural soil if their vital -- though not necessarily academic significance -- is to be grasped.

Experimentation is one of the established features of the drama of Penina Muhando. I therefore concern myself a great deal with demonstrating the experimental and hybrid nature of her drama, how it attempts to move away, directly and indirectly, from a colonial imposed tradition of drama, a legacy of uncritical assimilation of imported dramatic and theatrical structures. I also show how Penina Muhando is trying to move towards the kind of drama that is shaped primarily through an indigenous social and cultural environment.

The five plays (the sixth, Harakati za Ukombozi, because it belongs to a new just emerging category of its own, will be discussed in the conclusion) analysed tend to divide into two categories, a point of interest in the study of the plays. All of them attempt an investigation of social problems with the view of solving them. Tambueni Haki Zetu, Pambo, and Talaka, Si Mke Wangu, however, are based on a broader, less empirical exposition of the social values that trigger the problems being dramatised than are Hatia and Heshima Yangu, which are based on a confined, and rather sheltered family environment. The latter, and to a smaller extent the former too, dramatise social problems through the eloquent feelings of family members, relatives and communal minded peasants. All the plays deal with social problems from the point of view of the welfare of the common man, the "innocent, and potentially good" member of the society. Whether this moralistic approach is appropriate for looking at social problems of economic and political nature in Tanzanian society, constitutes a bone of contention in the analysis of the plays.

Chapter V, the conclusion, presents a critical summary that regards Penina Muhando as a dramatist in a national campaign, with a close evaluation of the major discoveries encountered in the course of the study. This evaluation is integrated with speculations about the possible future trends of the drama of Penina Muhando, and the kind of theatre it may give rise to in Tanzania, as well as the contribution it will make to the growth of modern African Theatre. As a means for speculation about the future possibilities and trends of Penina Muhando, the Conclusion also discusses Harakati za Ukombozi, recently performed in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, under the direction of Penina Muhando as part of the celebrations for the new ruling National Party.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Professor Stephen Arnold, my supervisor, whose help and encouragement were some of the decisive factors in the completion of this thesis. My thanks also go to committee members, Professor James De Felice, and Professor David Barnet for their valuable comments. I would also like to thank Mrs. Carol Arnold for her help in typing the first draft of this thesis, and also to Margriet for working under pressure to have the thesis typed in time.

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CHAPTER I

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF AFRICAN THEATRE

In order to understand the dramas of Penina Muhando, it is necessary not only to know her plays and a few specific things about Tanzania, but also some generalisations about theatre and cultural life in the rest of Africa. Since Muhando writes for ordinary people rather than the highly educated, her audiences understand her intuitively. One might then ask, why begin with a survey of scholarship on theatre in Africa? The answer lies in the fact that Penina Muhando is part of a continent-wide movement to create a modern, authentically African theatre.

Most modern African dramatists recognise a common dilemma in regard to the creation of African theatre; how can authentically African drama and theatre be made from an imported European colonial drama that was intended, first of all, to entertain colonial agents resident in Africa, and secondly, to alienate Africans being trained to run their countries on behalf of the colonialists? Many African dramatists hold the belief that African cultural and artistic traditions hold the key to this most pressing question.

If we survey the opinions of these dramatists and drama critics in search of a modern African theatre, we will be able to assess the ways in which Penina Muhando is original, and to see her debts. We will see her in the perspective of evolution by describing typical trends and individual idiosyncracies in a spectrum of articles, reviews, papers and books on modern African theatre. Since Penina Muhando is both a scholar and playwright and has written theoretical articles as well as plays, she will be constantly referred to in the discussion.

Penina Muhando is quite consciously a part of the movement towards the creation of modern African theatre. Through her plays and theoretical writings she has amply demonstrated her commitment to the establishment of this theatre. Evidence of this can be seen in her article "Modern African Theatre with Emphasis on East Africa"[3] in which her interest in what is happening in many corners of Africa, especially the creative and experimental activity in Anglophone theatre circles, can clearly be seen.

Though we will follow Penina Muhando's search for modern African theatre, we will roam further because more material is available to us than to her. In much of the material to be surveyed we will point out and discuss typical generalisations, distortions and mystifications that are found in many articles, and we will point out the inadequacies of others. Except where exceptional quality or originality of a piece of scholarship merits special mention, we will proceed in summary fashion in order to eliminate the repetition that is so common in this field.

We begin with one area in which many scholars and artists have been most vigorously involved: the definition of African theatre. The importation of European theatre during the colonial era has led to a wrong but strongly held belief that theatre is only that which is based on "well-written" drama, and that theatre is only possible on an indoor stage, under a picture frame proscenium arch and fancy stage lights. This misconception of the meaning of theatre is based on the outmoded standards that the colonial theatre practitioners, who introduced European theatre to Africa, thought could apply almost anywhere. This type of conception has affected much of the criticism by making it assess theatre in Africa using inappropriate criteria.

In writing about traditional Black African theatre, James Amankulor attempts to tackle the problems involved in the critical evaluation of traditional theatre and, by extension, of theatre in general in Africa. In his article, "The Traditional Black African Theatre: Problems of Critical Evaluation," he urges new critical criteria for distinguishing oral dramatic forms that exist in traditional African drama from the written dramatic forms which are invariably taken to mean western drama. Part of Amankulor's criticism is appropriately levelled against those scholars who, weaned on a strictly colonial theatrical diet of English origin, go on to base their claims about the presence or absence of drama in traditional Africa on a European ethnocentric definition without regard to the unique features of traditional oral drama. He further observes that western scholars, failing to identify and appreciate the unique features which bear a non-western character, usually come to the bigoted conclusion that drama is non-existent in traditional culture. He presents the conclusion, that one can only assess the nature of African theatre and drama, particularly the traditional, by applying new criteria and categories to traditional performances which must be observed first hand to be criticized honestly. To demonstrate how this can be done he goes on to describe several traditional theatrical performances, rich in drama and dramatic activity, which he has observed in Nigeria. Describing the various formal principles underlying the structure of the dramatic content in the performances, he shows the fundamental contrasts between African traditional theatre and theatre in the western sense.

The significance of Amankulor's paper lies in its success in outlining the independence of traditional theatre from alien cultural sources. He frees African theatre from a dependency on foreign cultural models, allowing it to pursue a life of its own based more on an indigenous traditional heritage. This also reflects Penina Muhando's struggle to define the uniqueness and independence of traditional theatre on the basis of first hand observation.[4] In describing and analysing in detail the different formalities, patterns and structures obtaining in traditional performances, Amankulor lays a foundation for artistic innovation needed to draw theatre in Africa away from a stultifying imitation of imported theatre. This innovation, Amankulor feels, can only be inspired by a fresh, critical and surgical look into traditional culture as a source for modern African theatre.

> At this stage however, research has to do a duty of classifying traditional African festivals not merely into the dramatic and the non-dramatic but also into drama and non-drama [emphasis mine].[5]

Although Amankulor's article is on the whole a good example of positive criticism, he occasionally compromises himself. For instance, his concern that western scholars have failed to appreciate the unique vitality within traditional African drama turns into a desperate anxiety which prompts him to seize on Antonin Artaud as an exception to the rule, an example of one enlightened European who has finally recognised the worth and richness of non-European cultures, including African culture. Amankulor credits Artaud with being perceptive enough to note the abundance of theatrical material and forms in the "primitive" cultures of Asia and Africa. In Amankulor's estimation, this fascination with and condescension to "primitive" theatrical culture by Artaud constitutes a genuine tribute by Artaud to African traditional culture for which every African must be grateful. It is unfortunate that it has not occurred to Amankulor that Artaud's lust for "primitivism" and the occult, values that he advocated for his "Theatre of Cruelty," has nothing to do with commitment to the independence and development of African traditional cultures. To dampen Amankulor's enthusiasm for Artaud one should perhaps remind him that Artaud's flirtations with primitive cultures were motivated solely by his ideosyncratic need to obtain "spiritual" sources from which to embellish his theories and neurotic ideas on theatre.

From a familiar quarter we are confronted with another article whose definition of African drama and theatre leaves us high up in the clouds of mysticism. The article belongs to none other than Wole Soyinka and is the best representative of the trend of criticism which defines African drama in the context of an exclusive "African worldview." A Nigerian, Wole Soyinka is the most renowned dramatist on the continent with ten published plays to his credit. His plays borrow considerably from the traditional cultural heritage of the Yoruba, his ethnic group, as much as they borrow from modern European theatrical techniques and experiences. Some of his experiences are derived almost entirely from Yoruba traditional cultures in which he has done extensive and intensive research. His contribution to modern African theatre, both as a dramatist and scholar, has been great. A great influence upon up and coming dramatists like Penina Muhando, Soyinka has written many scholarly articles on theatre in Africa, relating it to traditional cultures. We will therefore examine his article, "Drama and the African World View," in which he hammers out a most elaborate definition of African theatre. The article is based on Soyinka's understanding of the metaphysical world and its reflection in the Yoruba social and religious psyche, an understanding that is applied towards a definition of African drama. (This is something akin to an attempt to define "Canadian" music by using chansons from Quebec as the sole model for analysis.) Drawing a dichotomy between the "western mind"and the "African worldview," Soyinka proceeds to spin webs of mysticism around the eyes of the readers in an agonising attempt to define African drama and the ways in which it differs in its "spiritual" quality from European drama which reflects the "western mind" and "worldview." He defines African drama as a representation or dramatisation of the conflict between the real world and the universe, the conflict between the "visible" and the "invisible"world, two entities that constitute the "cosmos." In this kind of thinking, Soyinka seems to have been influenced by his study of, and fascination with the metaphysical content of ancient Greek classics, using it to assume for African theatre a metaphysical role. To him theatre is essentially, especially in Africa, "a symbolic arena for metaphysical contests."[6] This role is represented particularly by ritual theatre whose aim he sees as a reflection through physical and symbolic means of "the archetypal struggle of the moral being against exterior forces."[7] Thus, ultimately for Soyinka, African drama expresses not man's earthly struggle in Africa and the world in general, but the conflicts between an abstract individual and a still more abstract phenomenon, the cosmos, conflicts that result from the "rupture" between the individual and "spiritual external powers" that supposedly control him. (What is passed off here as African is conceptually the Judeo-Christian Fall from grace and innocence that is central to the non-Greek current of Western thought.)

There is no doubt that there is much to benefit from in Soyinka's analysis of the metaphysical worldview in "African" (read Yoruba) traditional culture. What one has to attack though, is his insistence on basing a definition of modern African theatre exclusively on a traditional spiritual outlook instead of on contemporary material reality. In most of his writings on theatre, and in his plays, Soyinka has always played the high priest and spokesman for mystical spirituality. He chooses to employ such spirituality because for him it yields the necessary elements for "excellent" and "profound" drama which would appeal both to "modernist" European audiences hungering after the spirituality and the ritual dimension they feel theatre has lost (in essence this "modernism" is avante garde, negritude drama, inaccessible to the masses), and to African dramatists like Penina Muhando who are interested in genuine experimentation with forms and content from traditional cultures.

J.C. de Graft's article, "Roots of African Drama and Theatre," is another attempt to define African theatre. In it J.C. de Graft discusses the nature and the social context of drama in traditional culture, emphasizing its ~~magical~~ and spiritual dimension. His discussion is a further elaboration of the position of Soyinka, but unlike Soyinka, J.C. de Graft lacks the mastery that Soyinka commands over metaphysics and its application to African theatre. For this reason the article is less obscure and more accessible to general readers. The article is especially significant because it describes in rather illuminating ways the transition from traditional to modern African drama and how the latter draws heavily from the former. This has been an area in which all aspiring African theatre artists have shown tremendous interest. (The plays of Penina Muhando themselves reflect an awareness of such a transition and are written particularly to respond to its demands.) However, it is when he finally attempts to define drama and theatre in modern day Africa as a product of this transition, that he employs the abstract spiritual outlook of Soyinka and rambles off into mysticism.

The substance of theatre, he asserts,

> is the terror that we seek to master, the inimical forces we seek to propitiate, the spiritual barrenness we seek to turn into fertility, the mind's wounds we seek to heal, the cosmic joy we seek to share in, the empathy we seek to establish with the world of animate and inanimate things around us: this is what people who are devoted to drama go to the theatre to experience. The seeking is akin to the act of worship, and for an act of worship to have any efficacy the worshipper must also bring to it belief in the goddess of the shrine, understanding and sympathy for the rituals, and a readiness to surrender himself wholly to the rhythm of the service [emphasis mine].[8]

I have quoted the article at some length for I consider J.C. de Graft's views as strongly underlining the trend of thought that imposes the spirituality of the traditional forms of theatre on the function of modern African theatre. The author represents those critics and scholars on African theatre who transform the social and political role of the theatre into that of the church, of mystifying and stupefying the people by trapping the theatre within incorrect analyses.

Other critics and commentators who have not been guilty of mystification have been guilty of making misleading observations and assertions due to their romanticisation of African theatre. Scott Kennedy is a good example. In his book about theatre in Ghana, In Search of African Theatre, Kennedy concentrates more on glorifying and romanticising his own personal experiences, rather than drawing up a truthful picture. His book is nevertheless important for the valuable impressions that it gives us about Kennedy's theatrical experiences in Ghana which at times yield a good amount of information about the practical aspects of modern theatre in that country. On numerous occasions, however, what value there is in the book is diminished when the author stumbles upon his own romanticism, especially when he attempts to define African theatre, which he proceeds to do on the basis of pop-eyed fascination with the African "way of life."

> Their theatre is a celebration of life. A communion of vibrations . . . African theatre may be viewed as a total creation, a volcanic eruption of the art forms caught in the middle of a particular African society.[9]

Kennedy's insights into, and conclusions about African theatre as he observed it in Ghana are products of the fantasies of an Afro-American come home, a projected hallucination without roots. He glamorises African culture and life in a way that almost turns them into tourist attractions. Kennedy's good intentions shine through the book, but however well-intentioned he is in his efforts to participate in the cultural life of Ghana, his participation cannot in the long run be really convincing or productive because it is motivated more by a self-indulgent, futile search for his roots rather than by an enduring commitment which would demand objective investigation.

"African Theatre," Lewis Nkosi's review of African theatre performances in London is another reflection of the romantic attitude that greets African cultural products abroad. Renga Moi[10] is one of the plays that features in the review. It was directed by Robert Serumaga, head of Theatre Limited Company from Uganda, who is notorious for exploiting traditional culture for the sake of providing an external formal glamour to his theatre which is mainly directed at European bourgeois audiences. Nkosi gives Renga Moi a positive review, and on the whole seems to validate Serumaga's type of theatre. Commenting on one of the most glaring features of the play, Nkosi betrays his tourist mentality which colors the otherwise genuine artistic appreciation he has for the play:

> One's initial response was one of incredulous astonishment at the plasticity and power of those ebony, beauti-

> fully muscled bodies, moving with the blithe precision of prowling panthers on the stage, and just as suddenly the mute frozen stillness of bodies which for more than fifteen minutes stay grouped like carved figures on the stage.[11]

Penina Muhando recognises the danger that occurs when elements of African traditional culture are utilized for the mere sake of selling theatre to a paying audience. Speaking on the growing trend of using elements from traditional culture, she warns of the danger of romanticism, pointing out that in some of the attempts to reproduce traditional culture

> . . . mistakes have been made of using unrelated aspects here and there in the name of "Africanness" but leaving the theatre as irrelevant as before. Many people are failing to see that building a modern African theatre based on traditional African theatre does not only involve the use of the witch doctor's gourds or the traditional dancer's costume.[12]

Perhaps another good example of the romantic exploitation of African culture and African theatre is provided, not by an African theatre critic this time, but by a European theatre practitioner who has visited Africa to conduct theatre experiments. His name is Peter Brook.[13] He was head of a 3-month expedition, sponsored by the International Centre of Theatre Research in Paris, which trekked across the sands of North Africa in 1972. The aim of the expedition was to conduct experimental work and research, establishing intercultural contacts between a Europe based theatre and "primitive" African audiences. The contacts were to be established without the use of speech or dialogue but purely on a gestural and "sensory" level. As Peter Brook puts it, the aim was to make human contact. Elaborating on the question for which the expedition sought an answer in Africa, he asked

> In what conditions is it possible for what happens in a

> theatre experience to originate from a group of actors and be received and shared by spectators without the help and hindrance of the shared cultural signs and tokens?[14]

The bourgeois theatre is in the process of decay, and is in dire need of new energy, a fact that Peter Brook is well aware of. His real purpose for mounting such an expedition was not to conduct a "pure" experiment, but to look for new theatrical structures, new theatrical values and new conditions that can revitalise the bourgeois theatre, give it a new lease on life. One of the ways in which bourgeois theatre practitioners hope this can be done is through experimentation within the contexts of other cultures, cultures that are considered "primitive" and therefore life giving. Peter Brook comments about the impasse facing the bourgeois theatre:

> In a period like our own, of such social decay and confusion, the official theatre and by that I mean the middle class theatres to the Broadway musicals, can never go far and never affirm more than husks of value.[15]

In the end, therefore, Brook's attempts at intercultural contacts have nothing to do with promotion of African theatre or promotion of ties between theatres from diverse cultures.

Amidst the distortions and misleading generalisations that have appeared on the question of African theatre, there have been some genuine attempts to chart out a meaningful direction for modern African theatre. Although these attempts have not often been attended by practical demonstrations, they have yielded a fair amount of steam for driving African theatre artists ahead on the road to indigenously based theatre. Most of these critical attempts, however, have been based on a hasty grasp of the development of theatre in Africa, an impatient rejection of current efforts as inadequate and inappropriate, and overenthusiasm to seize on any and all available alternative sources however tenuous or specious they might be.

Mukotani Rugyendo's paper, "Towards a Truly African Theatre," must be mentioned, not necessarily because it provides the most correct answers, but because it is passionate in its rejection of the vestiges of colonial theatre, and exemplifies the impatience that Penina Muhando and others feel in the whole question of a genuinely African theatre. Rugyendo's article is also significant because it generally expresses some of the views held in the Department of Art, Music and Theatre at the University of Dar-es-Salaam where he and Penina Muhando were students; the Department's orientation has influenced his thinking about theatre.[16]

Rugyendo focuses his attack on the remnants of colonial esthetic values in contemporary theatre in Africa, and the domination of western theatrical tradition in the plays and productions of major dramatists in Africa. Giving examples of how alien theatrical standards have influenced the formal nature of the theatre that is operated by the cultural elites in Africa's urban centres, Rugyendo cites the introduction of the die-hard proscenium arch and its promotion as the only setting possible for a play. He also cites the introduction of the hard and fast division between the audience and the actor (which does not exist in traditional performances) during a performance as one of the principle characteristics of the imported colonial bourgeois sitting room drama. He goes on to discuss at some length the content and form of this elitist theatre, and notes, for example, that plays written for such a theatre

> . . . have been steeped in the imported tradition . . . and . . . have only been accepted by those who have passed through the western-oriented educational system . . . What is important to know is that these new plays have been received by as little a minority as five

percent of our population.[17]

Those dramatists who have been writing such plays do not have the majority of the people -- that is, the masses in mind -- as their audience. They have been preoccupied with "producing 'masterpieces' for the West end of London and Broadway and being talked of in highsounding terms in foreign magazines."[18] This accusation is clearly true for playwrights like Wole Soyinka and J.P. Clark[19] who, although they may not be writing for West End of London and Broadway, aim their drama at a "universal" audience which most of the time means a non-African audience. However, not many of the elitist playwrights can always afford to entertain the hope of being produced abroad, not to mention West End or Broadway, unless of course they have steady and long standing connections with European or American theatrical circles.

Further on in the article Rugyendo examines some of the major African dramatists: Wole Soyinka, J.P. Clark, Obotunde Ijimere[20] and Duro Ladipo,[21] and finds in their works certain vital missing links which put them under a question mark whether they are representatives of an authentic modern African theatres. Rugyendo observes that while these playwrights have deeply delved into traditional cultures, new theatrical material to make their theatres culturally relevant, their efforts have been superficial and have only resulted in putting African masks over essentially European forms. Singling out Soyinka's drama as typical of these half baked attempts, Rugyendo says of them:

> . . . Soyinka's dramas come out as if they were intended for Europeans who want to understand some things African. He fails to come down completely to wallowing in true African theatrical tradition. He should know that it does not suffice to employ aspects of traditional theatre here and there in a drama that is modelled on a different tradition.[22]

Judging from the nature of his partly justified attacks on "un-African" playwrights, Rugyendo seems to be arguing that the only correct direction for a "truly African theatre" lies in basing it almost exclusively on traditional theatrical forms. This is confirmed in the prescription he gives in which he champions a kind of drama

> . . . whose total form is based on the traditional forms with all the incidents in the drama existing within the confines of that form. If the play is based on a ritual, let the rhythm of the ritual pervade the play from beginning to end and not just have a ritual as a simple part of something . . . totally alien.[23]

Although Rugyendo's dissatisfaction with the present state of drama in Africa is justified (as far as written drama is concerned), at times his views become vague. On the whole, his criticism of the major African dramatists and the type of theatres they represent lacks detailed analysis and mature and sophisticated understanding of the European traditions he attacks, and of their effect on the African dramatists who perpetuate these traditions. With such dimensions lacking from his critique, Rugyendo easily runs the danger of being a cultural nationalist of little substance.

Another voice that joins that of Rugyendo in echoing the sentiments that Penina Muhando feels but has not yet had time to express in full theoretical terms, is that of Demas Nwoko in an article, "Search For A New African Theatre." Nwoko's article, unlike Rugyendo's is based on longer experience in, and more developed insights into theatre, both African and European; Nwoko is not merely an armchair academician like many African critics who have written on theatre so far, but also a practitioner of the theatre, a theatre designer who has participated practically in the search for African theatre. His proposals for a new theatre seem to be dictated by practical considerations and are not merely theoretical projections. Starting with the obvious observation that a significant part of the cultural life in Africa has been determined by non-indigenous forces, Nwoko proceeds to assess how the situation is being remedied especially in the field of theatre. Like Rugyendo, he notes that where imported theatre has begun to be replaced by a foundation for modern African theatre with indigenous roots, the attempts to institute the latter have not always been authentic. Much of the experimentation that has been conducted, mainly with departments of Theatre or Drama in African Universities, has been done on the basis of an alien culture's view of African culture. This is to say, the theatre artists and scholars who have developed the commitment towards "African Culture," have been trained to perceive it from the Olympian heights of bourgeois generalisations and romantic idealisations of the said culture. To create a thriving African theatre, Nwoko advocates that

> . . . the young African artist should be taught the classic art forms of Africa . . . To achieve this our art and theatre schools should be practical professional workshops outside the University.[24] [emphasis mine]

One should applaud Nwoko's progressive position in advocating the liberation of theatre from the confines of the enclave that the University can certainly be, but one should wonder at the same time; where does Nwoko propose African theatre should go? To another imprisoning enclave, this time the abstract one of "classical art forms"? While the study of the cultural heritage of traditional Africa is important in the creation of modern theatre, to base such a theatre on a so-called "classical" heritage will put fetters on it and turn it into a static phenomenon. (What constitutes a "classical art form" in Africa is problematic anyway.)

Modern African theatre should be crystallised, albeit with care, from both the past and the contemporary heritage of African culture.

One of the most important prerequisites for the creation of modern African theatre, according to Nwoko, is the promotion of national culture, a point that he makes quite convincingly. However, his proposal that the creation of a people's theatre should be the second prerequisite sounds hollow and opportunistic. Unable to define the type of "people" he has in mind, he remains suspect in our eyes and we are led to regard him as belonging to that category of opportunistic artists who condescendingly invoke the slogan "people's art" in order to create an unearned credibility around themselves. Their declamations about a "people's theatre" or "people's art" also become a cover for a self-indulgent individualism and a false pride in being artistic liberals and "democrats."

Nevertheless, the impression left in one who has read extensive scholarship on the topic is that the central characteristic of modern African theatre is the cultural nationalism of the type that Demas Nwoko is espousing.[25] In spite of the doubts we have about Nwoko, his campaign for culturally relevant theatre is not merely based on declamations against imported theatre and for an indigenously based theatre. His campaign is favourably marked by a practical approach to theatre, an aspect that has been sorely missing in many other critical attempts. Among the proposals he gives, there is one that argues for increased theatre production and for the developing of African theatre through practice, rather than through theory. And there is another equally important one that argues for a more imaginative and relevant methods of training artists for modern African theatre.

For all his passionate calls that modern African theatre should be established on the independent strength of indigenous forces and resources, Nwoko sees no harm in the co-existence between indigenous forms and techniques and those learned and borrowed from alien cultures and adapted to local conditions. This may sound safe enough but still it leaves one wondering whether Nwoko's "concession" might not in fact be a cover for slipping back into, and maintaining the same "universal" standards -- which in reality mean bourgeois European standards -- which, as we have seen, the bourgeois trained, major African dramatists aspire to fulfill. That is not to say cultural co-existence is essentially a sin, but how can an African dramatist who desires a regenerative cultural co-existence, who desires to coopt the progressive features of both traditions, European and African, conquer the current preponderance of the former, to create a richer and predominantly indigenous-based theatre? To this crucial question, Nwoko provides no answer and his proposal remains an empty formula.

Another significant article that attempts to sketch out a direction towards a "genuine African theatre" is by Joachim Fiebach, "On the Social Function of Modern African Theatre and Brecht."[26] The article represents a major advance for criticism on African theatre for it is the first one that claims to examine the question of African theatre from a "socialist" perspective. Fiebach, who was formerly a lecturer in the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, demonstrates much more developed thinking than Rugyendo or Nwoko on the question of African theatre in its relationship to European theatre. He is concerned with the question of what road modern African theatre should take now that is has begun to realise itself out of the imprisonment in the colonial cultural cage. He seems to think that by linking African theatre to progressive theatre traditions from other parts of the world much benefit can be reaped in the long run. He goes on to present Brecht as the best progressive model for Africa, not only for his theatrical techniques and the formal qualities of his theatre, which are popular for their rejection of the narrow, petty and aimless "naturalism" of bourgeois theatre, but mainly for his socio-ideological approach to theatre which is based on Marxism. What distinguishes Fiebach's criticism from many, including Rugyendo's in "Towards a Truly African Theatre" and Lewis Nkosi's in Home and Exile[27] (which have touched on the question of Brecht and Africa) is that Fiebach appreciates Brecht from an ideological point of view while others do so only from the point of view of Brecht's theatricalism.

While Rugyendo and Nkosi see the example of Brecht leading to a transformation of theatre, Fiebach regards Brecht as an example which caters to the need for theatre to be a force to transform society, and a means of educating the masses on basic social and political issues related to class struggle. Also, in more precise terms than either Rugyendo or Nkosi, Fiebach advocates that there should be a new relationship between the dramatist and his audience that will attend to the new role of theatre which he proposes, i.e. transformation of society. He also advocates that the African theatre audience should consist of workers and peasants.

In between his progressive views, however, Fiebach seems to be using Brecht to make propaganda for revisionism, to promote the false reputation that the revisionist East European countries have in Africa, that they belong to the socialist camp. Citing "socialist" Poland, Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic where he hails from, Fiebach implicitly claims that because the theatre in these countries, like that of Brecht, is anti-naturalistic and antagonistic to the obsolete drawing-room theatre of the middle class, it is socialist and is worthy of providing a model to Africa as an alternative to the dying remnants of colonial theatre. Commending Lewis Nkosi for his rejection of European theatre as a model for Africa,[28] he reproaches him in the same breath for failing to realise that current European theatre is not homogeneous, that it is not all bad, that there is one that is really good for Africa -- the "socialist" theatre of Eastern Europe! To strengthen his false claim, he proceeds to give a simplistic and deceptive analysis of European theatre. There are, he lectures, two types of European theatre: On the one hand, a bourgeois theatre under which can be grouped the activities of the Absurdists and the "avante garde" in Western and Northern Europe, and on the other hand, the "socialist" type in Eastern Europe which he says is a "democratic and realistic movement that firmly advocates a metaphorical and poetic theatrical structure.[29] We note above that Fiebach, in his definition of the so-called "socialist" theatre, does not even dare to mention what the function or the ideological content of this theatre is. This is because this "socialist" theatre does not serve any socialist cause nor does it have any genuine socialist content, and so Fiebach avoids mentioning them because he does not want to be exposed openly lying. The truth is that the theatre in these "socialist" countries has long ago joined hands with the modern bourgeois theatre in Western Europe, and the former has become indistinguishable from the latter. The proof of this can be seen, for example, in such theatre experiments as "The Poor Theatre" by Jercy Gratowski in Poland. This theatre (grossly misnamed, for it is by no means poor), officially blessed in Poland, operates within some of the most advanced forms of bourgeois spiritual mysticism in the name of "experimentation." It is highly revered in Poland as much as it is among the petty bourgeoisie in Western Europe and the United States.

Fiebach's idealisation of theatre in East European countries is clearly intended to entice African dramatists into the revisionist orbit to be culturally dominated. African theatre and dramatists can definitely benefit from more Marxist discussion, though not of Fiebach's social-imperialist type which appears to present an impeccable "socialist" alternative. Whatever Marxist discussion is introduced into the criticism of African theatre has to be rigorously scrutinized, for opportunists can make reactionary use of genuine progressive sentiments of dramatists, like Penina Muhando, who are eagerly seeking alternatives to the inherited colonial theatre.

With uncertain steps, indigenous critics have started to appropriate fragments of the Marxist outlook and integrated them into their writing. Mukotani Rugyendo is one of them. Some of his views in his article "Towards a Truly African Theatre" occasionally echo Marxist ideology. However, judging from the emphasis Rugyendo places on the role of traditional culture in the formation of modern African theatre, he is far more a traditionalist (i.e. a petit bourgeois nationalist) in the service of neo-colonialism rather than a Marxist in the service of the people.[30]

Introduction of Marxist analysis and point of view is healthy for the growth of genuine African theatre. It will raise the consciousness of progressive dramatists and artists above the narrow traditionalist ideology which urges the belief that main social contradictions stem from the context of a simplistically drawn tradition vs. modernity conflict.[31]

Fiebach's article has discussed African theatre in a wide comparative international context, an act that as we have seen, cannot but be of benefit to the growth of African theatre. Cherif Khaznadar's article "Tendencies and Prospects for Third World Theatre,"[32] discusses questions crucial to African theatre within the context of a "Third World" social and cultural situation. Like all progressive artists, Penina Muhando is eager to link what happens in the theatre in Tanzania and in Africa with what goes on in other parts of the world, especially the "Third World," and would no doubt find the paper pertinent for her growth. For this reason the paper which sums up important concerns common to all "Third World" countries, is of particular significance, and, because of this, has to be criticised all the more vigorously.

The paper was prepared for the 7th Festival of the Arts held on the 30th August, 1975 in Persepolis, Iran,[33] and it was in response to the theme of the festival, namely "The Theatre of the Third World." The theme was intended to lead to a definition of "Third World" Theatre, and the establishment of proper social and cultural conditions for its creation and growth attended by entirely different forms and goals from those imposed by cultural imperialism. The position reflected by this theme corresponds closely to the cultural nationalism espoused by Nwoko, Rugyendo, and practised by Penina Muhando in her plays. The paper calls for an end to a Eurocentric definition of theatre, and for a recognition of the diverse forms and identities of the various theatres found throughout the different cultures of the "Third World," thus encouraging independent theatre traditions. Khaznadar sees such independence as a step towards, and part of the cultural liberation process. As he goes on, however, he seems to regard this cultural liberation, not as part of the struggles that the "Third World" countries are waging against imperialism, but as an independent process that stands apart from social and political struggles. By making such a distortion, Khaznadar creates the dangerous illusion that the masses in the "Third World" have already emancipated themselves socially and politically, and that now, all they have to aspire to is cultural emancipation of the abstract kind advocated by petit bourgeois nationalists of Khaznadar's type.

The paper is not without its usefulness, however. The question of cultural decolonisation is a real and crucial one as has already been amply demonstrated by the number of critics and commentators preoccupied with it. In spite of the fact that the paper does not define the content of the cultural nationalism it calls for, as to what class the cultural nationalism will serve, it clearly articulates the vital, widely felt concerns for a sustained cultural independence and growth in the "Third World." The type of theatre that should be promoted in the "Third World" to counter the stultifying effects of imported theatre is, according to Khaznadar, one that is tied to traditions rooted "in specific cultures, [that] attempts to go beyond the transitory phenomena of fashion and to become an instrument of popular consciousness, to reflect the identity of a nation of people."[34]

We have been examining the question of African Theatre as has been fragmentarily treated by scattered articles, reviews and papers, the only forms in which criticism on African theatre exist. (This criticism only deals with individual points and isolated areas of African theatre.) We shall now round off the chapter by looking at some of the attempts made to do a comprehensive overview of African theatre in its various forms in a historical development. In this task we are bound to meet with frustration stemming from lack of books which contain comprehensive criticism and analysis. The important lack of books can be explained largely by the fact that theatre in Africa has not yet branched off into an independent area of scholarship. The theatre still largely remains an appendage of the study of African literature which hardly pays attention to its special demands. It is only at the beginning of the present century that more attention has been paid to African theatre as an entity separate from, though strongly related to, African literature.

In this "critical desert," two books, one by an African and another by a European, easily stand out in giving a comprehensive picture of the works and efforts of African theatre artists, enabling them to become acquainted with each other. The first of the two, and also the first book on African theatre to appear was by Bakary Traore, The Black African Theatre and Its Social Function,[35] published in 1972 although written in 1959 as a Doctoral dissertation when African theatre was still an unknown field. The other, published as recently as 1974, is The Drama of Black Africa[36] by Anthony Graham-White.

In spite of being two decades old, (the published version did not change much from the original) much of Traore's book remains valid. In a major way, it is a stimulating source to scholars and artists in African theatre today, offering important insights and at times controversial assumptions. The book speaks out on the relationship of the arts to the African struggles, the significance of Afrigan languages, and the relationship between African theatre and folklore. The bulk of the work is devoted to an incisive analysis of the experimental work in theatre conducted at L'Ecole William Ponty in Senegal under the auspices of the French colonial administration and of Fodeba Keita's "Théâtre Africain," also in Senegal.[37] Although Traore's detailed analysis of both movements serve to provide good and practical examples for all practitioners of African theatre, it has one major weakness; it tends to lead to generalisations about the nature of African theatre as a whole, based exclusively on the theatrical experiences in Francophone Africa. Traore seems to think that theatre ends at the borders of Francophone Africa, and in this is afflicted by the same problem that faces Penina Muhando in her theoretical writings on African theatre, ignorance of what goes on in other parts of Africa (See note 3). For example, failing to show much knowledge of what goes on in theatre in South Africa, Traore boldly denies the existence of black theatre there. He also declares that except for folk performances, theatre does not exist in Angola and Mozambique. Such careless comments reflect the disparaging observations of western scholars who, for a long time maintained that nothing like theatre exists in Africa. Nevertheless, his work is important for its sociological analysis of African theatre in the context of the political struggles of the African peoples against colonialism.

Graham-White's The Drama of Black Africa is crystallised from a large number of books, monographs, articles, essays, reviews and newspaper reports dealing directly and indirectly with African theatre. The work is an extensive documentation and dauntless commentary on the drama of Sub-Saharan Africa is far more encompassing than Traore's. Although Graham-White touches on almost all parts of Africa, he puts most emphasis on West African drama, obviously because most of the available critical material on African theatre is centered on the West African scene, on Nigeria in particular.

The author approaches his subject more as a theatre critic than a theatre historian. However, he also gives a rough outline of the historical development of African drama (from its ritual beginnings to folk drama and recently, to literary or written drama), and speculations about its future.

Graham-White shows much commitment and sympathy for the development of African theatre; his perspective is largely Afro-centric, redressing the damage done by other western scholars who have been ethnocentric in analysing African drama and theatre. Yet Graham-White has never been in Africa and has therefore not been exposed to live experiences of his subject, a fact which imposes some shortcomings on his work. This weakness on his part as a researcher reflects the pitfalls of a great deal of scholarship on contemporary cultural activity. Relying only on published plays and secondary materials, a scholar like Graham-White remains ignorant of much of what is happening or has happened. Only fieldwork and interviews will provide an antidote to scholarly work which presents parts as the whole. The remaining parts of this thesis will hopefully contribute in a small way to the correction of the fragmentary view and erroneous observations we currently have of African drama. Penina Muhando's experience and knowledge of African theatre are generally subject to the limitations of the scholarship I have surveyed; but her practical activities will soon dissipate the influence of these limitations on her. But before we analyse her personal contribution to the eventual redefinition of African theatre, we must look briefly at East African theatre, a field she knows well and which many scholars know poorly.

CHAPTER II

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THEATRE IN EAST AFRICA: FOCUS ON TANZANIA

In the following examination of theatre in East Africa, we shall look not only at it in the countries that make up East Africa in the strict geopolitical sense of the term (Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda), but also East Africa geographically, which includes Zambia, where theatre has undergone such important developments that it cannot be ignored. All these countries (including countries like Malawi and Botswana), having various broad similarities in history, ranging from ancient migrations to Bantu absorption of Arabic language and culture, to recent direct British colonial rule and to the contemporary aftermath of flag independence under British-trained elites, expectedly share various concerns and similarities in the nature of their theatre. In West Africa where discussion of African theatre is most intense, and in the rest of Africa in general, theatrical activities in these East African countries is known to scholars only faintly and in a fragmentary way. But in "East" Africa itself, among practitioners of theatre, these activities are fairly well known. Since Penina Muhando is one of the most active and enquiring of these practitioners, no background discussion of her would be complete without at least cursory survey of theatre in the region.[38]

The focus of this chapter will, therefore, be the theatre in East Africa with emphasis on the positive developments and future possibilities for Tanzanian theatre. The aspect that will receive most attention will be the struggle that is today occurring between the legacy of colonial theatre and the emerging national and non-colonial theatre, a struggle that paves the way for a modern African theatre that aspires to involve itself in the experiences and struggles of the masses, an ideal that many well-intentioned and democratic artists with Muhando's sentiments cherish, unfortunately without, at times, having the necessary political consciousness and conviction to fulfill.

Because of geographical proximity and occasional personal contacts, East African dramatists have opportunities to learn from each other about progressive trends of theatre obtaining in each other's countries. One person whose example many progressive dramatists in East Africa would certainly like to follow is that set by Ngugi wa Thiong'o,[39] in his recent involvement in a theatre production with villagers of Kamiritho village in Limuru, Kenya. Reports of the experience suggest that it probably represents the most positive example to date of modern African theatre that champions the cause of the masses, and that merits being called a genuine people's theatre. Since some of the dramatists who are not merely fighting off the colonial legacy in theatre have a chance of throwing their lot in with the masses, as Ngugi has reportedly done, we open the examination of the East African theatrical scene with a discussion of this particular theatrical event.

It is unfortunate that most of what goes on theatrically in East Africa is left unrecorded, or when it is recorded many of the details are omitted and we are left with only a general sketch of what took place. Thus, about Ngugi's "experiment", we are left with a report which, although is informative, does not avail us of details that we need and would like to know. Ngugi's "experiment" is based on the production of his latest play Ngaahika Ndenda.[40] The author of the report on the production attributes to Ngugi the role of a pioneer for leading and participating in this production. He reports that, "A quiet but effective cultural revolution is taking place in East Africa and the man behind it is none other than Ngugi wa Thiong'o, formerly James Ngugi, the renowned author and playwright."[41]

The vehicle of this "quiet revolution," Ngaahika Ndenda, has stimulated in East Africa much discussion and excitement about modern African drama and its social function. The very fact that it is written in the vernacular is a significant one in the whole question of theatre for mass mobilisation and education. Had it been written and performed in English, it might still be playing, but it was banned in 1977 after running for only one month in front of standing-room-only rural audiences. It may have been banned because it was considered by the Kenyan government to be "provoking and inciting," and because it raised issues that the Kenyan bourgeoisie felt would best be forgotten: the land stolen by the landed bourgeoisie in Kenya from the peasants who struggled against the British and who aided the triumph over colonialism. Since the specific content of the play is not yet available in English, one cannot say how revolutionary the play really is beyond the fact that it attacks the Kenyan bourgeoisie, and that it voices some of the grievances of the peasantry. The level of its progressiveness can perhaps be surmised through what is available to us about the content of the play through the report.

Reportedly, the play dramatises various social issues from the pre-Independence to post-Independence Kenya, ranging from colonialism, neocolonialism, prostitution and greed for wealth, issues that acquired concrete meaning to the peasants when it was performed in the context of their local culture, and in the heat of their own participation in the process of its theatrical expression. The report cites to us an example of how the author portrays one of the questions the play deals with: the contrast between the "haves"and "have nots," the bourgeoisie and the downtrodden peasantry in Kenya. Two families, representing the two classes, are juxtaposed:

> . . . the Kigunda family in the role of the exploited peasantry as against the Kioi family, "blessed tycoons," who prosper on the sweat and blood of peasants. Nothing portrays more the difference between poverty of Kigunda's family and the posh expensive residence of Kioi with all the affluence of radiograms, the choice of Mercedez Benz cars, range rovers and above all the large tracts of unused land in Kioi's possession.[42]

To represent the two opposing class values and interests, only too familiar to the Kenyan peasantry, the play makes significant use of the family institution which the people cherish, understand and prize.

One cannot be exactly certain whether ot not it is the content of the play that motivated the ban; after all Ngugi has written another play, several novels and short stories that have criticized the bourgeoisie.[43] It is, beyond all doubt, the form and the context of the production that forced the government's hand, the example of theatre as something the people can take up that may have brought the ban. The fact that ordinary people were the main force behind this successful experiment was one the ruling class in Kenya could not ignore or tolerate. The government was alarmed by the potential existing in the context from which the production transpired. What was this context?

The play, produced and performed in a purely rural area, was exclusively directed at the masses of the people and not at an elite of the bourgeoisie or petty-bourgeoisie in the city. The peasants and workers of Kamiritho village participated in all the stages of the creation and "consumption" of the play, collaborating on the basis of improvisation, and in the writing, directing and acting of the play. This seems to be a reversal of the usual situation one still sees in modern African theatre whereby instead of providing the masses with encouragement and co-operation to be creators and beneficiaries of culture, the petty-bourgeois artist dishes out neo-colonial cultural products to them during the few moments he condescendingly involves himself with them. In terms of setting for the performance, the villagers proved once more that the play was their life experience in all its aspects. For its entire duration, the play was performed in a local open air theatre designed and built by the villagers using local resources to fit in with their centuries-old performing traditions. Given this context, there is no doubt that the villagers of Kamiritho felt fully involved emotionally and socially in the theatrical event and what it expressed in terms of their existence. They must have felt that the play was directly relevant to their cultural and historical past and to their hopes and aspirations for the future.

The type of theatre which Ngaahika Ndenda foreshadows is definitely a proper answer to the Kenya National Theatre in Nairobi. This theatre, only thirty miles from where Ngaahika Ndenda was performed, seems to pride itself in buying all the discarded products from the West End Theatre in London, and in encouraging playwrights who sweat their souls out to please a "universal" audience instead of writing for the local audience, playwrights who, according to M.N. Ruchoya, "Find themselves begging Shakespeare to teach them how to please their countrymen."[44]

We might as well discuss the whole of Ruchoya's article now that we have already touched on the Kenya National Theatre which represents the type of theatre that is being rejected through the Ngaahika Ndenda "experiment." Ruchoya's article is useful for the way it strongly takes issue with the Kenya National Theatre. But, although Ruchoya sets out to talk about drama in other East African countries, he ends up talking about drama in Kenya.[45] Defending himself in regard to his attack on the Kenya National Theatre as neo-colonial theatre, he points out that he is not against one culture learning from another, but cautions that the cultural shopping by the Kenya National Theatre in London's West End should not endanger indigenous theatre. He urges that drama in East Africa should be a mirror of East African life, not foreign culture. Although his cultural nationalism against Kenya National Theatre's neo-colonial character is not as significant as that of Ngugi to the struggle of the masses, it should be regarded as one more voice against the parasitic, pro-imperialist existence of the Kenya National Theatre.

The Kenya National Theatre is an outmoded cultural monument that the petty-bourgeois cultural elites have built in the path of progressive theatre to block the development of the people's culture; it sponsors imperialist culture and is "Kenyan" in name only. This can be seen without much difficulty in the guiding aims it has pompously laid down for itself. Called "the three dramatic pillars," the aims are: "to create dramatists of International standing; to create actors who can claim a high level of proficiency in their art; and to cultivate a national audience to understand and appreciate the theatre."[46] The first aim is a cover for reproducing dramatists to do imitations of second-rate theatrical importations from Britain. As we have seen "international standing" implies a successful imitation of the former and new colonial masters. The second aim implies a transplant of the concept of bourgeois artistic "excellence" which again has little to do with genuine excellence and genuine entertainment as these can be judged not within the context of rootless theatre, dependent on imported culture, but in the context of a popularly acknowledged locally based theatre. As for the third aim of cultivating and expanding the national audience, this sould be seen as a gimmick to have the government subsidies to the Kenya National Theatre increased and to have a better paid management, and not as an attempt to involve the people in the "cultural Life" of the nation.

The Kenya National Theatre is not the only one of its kind in East Africa. This kind of theatre finds parallels in the other East African countries. (A survey around all the Anglophone African countries will reveal versions of this theatre planted in the centres of the capital cities, many of them are given blood transfusions by the national ministries of culture in collaboration with the British Council.)

In Tanzania, where neo-colonial culture has not found as favourable a climate to flourish in as it has in Kenya, the West End type of theatre can nevertheless still be seen in the productions put out by The Little Theatre in Dar-es-Salaam significantly located in Oyster Bay, a residential area formerly reserved for Europeans (primarily British) during the colonial period, and not taken over by the local petty-bourgeoisie.

Ebrahim Hussein describes The Little Theatre which was formed in 1947, first under the name of The Dar-es-Salaam Players Club, as "equipped with stage machinery, flies, lighting and proscenium arch [and as bringing] to Tanzania London West-End Theatre."[47] Quoting from the Ministerial Archives File, No. So 524 (Registry of Societies, Home Affairs), Hussein describes the aims of The Little Theatre:

> The Little Theatre set out 'to promote and to foster knowledge and appreciation of the arts' - (to mean

> bourgeois dramatic arts) 'and in particular the dramatic and musical arts' and 'in furtherance of this to provide facilities for instructions and education in the above arts.'[48]

Between the Kenya National Theatre and The Little Theatre there is an interesting similarity in the way both have stated their aims and have perceived their functions in society. Filled with their own pomposity, ostentatiousness and cultural snobbery the two attempt in similar fashion to masquerade as cultural benefactors and civilizers. Purporting to be inspirers of artistic and cultural growth, they mask their true role which is that of propagating and trying to give validity to outmoded and decaying forms of theatre.

The establishment of The Little Theatre followed the introduction of colonial theatre into Tanzania. This theatre was imported into Tanzania in the 1920's when Tanganyika (name for mainland Tanzania prior to 1964) became a mandate territory of the British,[49] who constructed schools and colleges in which they acquainted elites with this kind of theatre. As early as 1922, Hussein writes, a school in Dar-es-Salaam "was already performing one act plays like Gow's 'The Sherif's Kitchen,' Milner's 'The Ugly Duckling,' McKinnel's 'The Bishop's Candlesticks' and Francis' 'The Birds of a Feather.'"[50] Using expensive costumes and promoting the proscenium arch as the ideal setting for theatre performances, this theatre took on themes and subject matter concerned with the "typical middle class family and its problems which has for milieu a drawing room, and which artistically respects unity of time, place and character."[51] The schools and colleges, being the main outposts for colonial culture and theatre, were influential in inspiring the belief that theatre is only that which was brought in by the colonial expatriates. The educated elite brought up in these institutions were later to become the designers of National Cultural policies which have allowed The Little Theatre to thrive. While claiming to be leading a national cultural "Revolution," the designers of these cultural policies in actual fact condone reactionary culture. (The significance of these facts to Penina Muhando will be brought out later.)

In Uganda the inheritors of the colonial theatre, while maintaining it in new forms, are careful to cover it up by claiming that they are contributing towards the development of "national culture" and a "national theatre." Their chief spokesman has been Robert Serumaga. His article, "Uganda Experimental Theatre," contains his views on theatre which attempted to justify the formation about a decade ago of the neo-colonial professional company which he heads, the Uganda Theatre Limited. The establishment of the company was more of a commercial rather than a cultural enterprise. Serumaga pretends to take issue with the theatre of Europe, as an imperialist institution "which came to Africa and established itself in complete ignorance of, and indifference to [African] traditions."[52] Trying to create an impression that this company is committed to provide a theatre antithetical to colonial theatre, Serumaga has taken to garbing his theatre productions with "colourful loincloths" of African traditional culture, productions which he packs off to Europe as food for the "spiritually hungry" European bourgeois audiences.[53]

Theatre Limited was formed in September, 1968. According to Janet Johnson, the theatre was founded to fill up an alleged theatrical vacuum in Uganda, a claim which echoes similar allegations referring to East Africa in general as "a literary desert." (Such accusations come from those too "high" up in their elitist clouds to notice the constant bustle of cultural activity going on among the people.) Such denials of the existence of theatre in Uganda were intended by Serumaga and his colleagues to justify the establishment of Theatre Limited as an authoritative model, a shrine where people are supposed to kneel to a cultural "goddess."

Like the Kenya National Theatre and The Little Theatre, Theatre Limited has also set for itself grandiose aims which its operators use to attribute to themselves a messianic role of "developing" the arts and bringing "culture" to the people. The three (the "holy trinity") aims for the company are:

> to establish a fully professional company offering opportunities to people wishing to take up theatre as a career; to present plays relevant to Uganda and of high artistic merit; to widen the range of existing audience.[54]

There is however little in the aims to justify the company operators' claims of a "messianic" role towards a creation of genuine indigenous or national theatre. In fact the contrary is indicated by some of the plays produced by Theatre Limited. Under the excuse that "high artistic aims must be combined with business sense,"[55] plays such as Aristophane's Lysistrata and Moliere's School For Wives are proudly paraded to prove the success of the company. These plays are performed allegedly because they constitute the kind of theatre the "people" of Uganda prefer and will pay to see. Like those of Kenya National Theatre and The Little Theatre, what the aims of Theatre Limited reflect is the desire by Serumaga and his group to create a "universal" neo-colonial theatre catering to the misleading standards of bourgeois artistic excellence.

This chapter began with the discussion of Ngaahika Ndenda, a possible measure of the height of radicalism scaled by the theatre in East Africa, a height which indicates the distance that modern African theatre has travelled and has yet to travel from the drawing room drama, the proscenium arch, and the delicate and colorless silk-clothed characters from the English colonial cultural closet. The positive example of Ngaahika Ndenda, and the negative examples of The Kenya National Theatre, The Little Theatre and Theatre Limited, have been juxtaposed with each other to demonstrate the nature of the struggle still to be waged in the East African theatre scene. It is quite clear that dramatists like Penina Muhando with sentiments for a People's Culture have no tolerance for the theatre represented by the three negative examples, and no doubt have nothing but admiration for that represented by Ngaahika Ndenda example. Seeing in Ngaahika Ndenda an inkling of what they are uncertainly striving for, and in the neo-colonial theatres the ghost of the colonial theatre they have been rejecting, Penina Muhando and others who share her ambitions have been caught up in a stimulating transition in which they have made some noteworthy achievements of a progressive, though often questionable, nature. It is my aim in the remaining part of this chapter to survey this transition and to examine the nature and content of some of the efforts being made within its context; we shall start with a discussion of one of the most interesting theatre experiments in "East Africa," the Chikwakwa Theatre in Zambia which has now folded due to a lack of manpower to run it.

Formed in 1969 as a popular theatre, Chikwakwa aspired to base itself on the local Zambian cultures, traditional and modern, and on local human resources, and to treat topics and issues from Zambian life, history and politics. Michael Etherton,[56] the principal founder of the theatre, describes its popular basis in "Zambia -- Popular Theatre," the most comprehensive article to date on theatre in Zambia:

> The idea of Chikwakwa Theatre was to develop, through self help, a theatre place that would allow an expansion of the traditional performing arts . . . The intention was to stay as close to the function of the traditional performing arts as possible, i.e. to tell the history of the tribe, to keep the society intact . . . Since these functions invariably involved the whole community either as performers or as audience, or at least were accessible to every one in the community, it follows that the work of Chikwakwa should also be accessible to all, and not simply on the level of admission charges.[57]

Etherton's article is significant not only for the substantial account and background to the formation of the Chikwakwa Theatre and of the theatre scene in Zambia in general, but also because it is based on the author's involvement in the birth and development of Chikwakwa Theatre itself. Although Etherton was based at the University of Zambia as a lecturer, he was able to immerse himself in the theatre life beyond the University. This involvement with a non-University theatre scene can be compared with the situation at the University of Dar-es-Salaam where through Penina Muhando and others the reach of the Theatre Arts department was extended to other areas of society at large. Besides reflecting the personal experiences of the author, the article also reflects the struggle between colonial expatriate theatre and a non-colonial indigenously based theatre.

According to Etherton, Chikwakwa was formed as a replacement of the expatriate colonial theatre that was mainly based in the cities of the Zambian copperbelt that served the European industrial mining population. The expatriate theatre consisted of plays of the Elizabethan era put out for the European mine workers to help them forget their hard day's labour. It predominated the theatre scene until the 1960's, propagating itself in the minds of the petty-bourgeois elite as the theatre worth emulating. However, discovering the inadequacy and the irrelevancy of the colonial theatre, many inventive minds searched for a basis on which to build an alternative theatre. This basis they found in a number of touring companies that criss-crossed Zambia providing plays, skits, dance dramas and musical routines, performing them among the people. Existing anonymously and leading an independent life from the colonial theatre, this theatre did not enjoy favour with the elite who derided it as being of a low cultural standard. Frequently this theatre became political, mounting anti-colonial criticism, a further kick at the colonial theatre which considered treatment of political themes taboo.

Ferdinand Oyono's Houseboy,[58] adapted into a play by Michael Etherton from the Cameroonian novel, was the first direct effort to breach one of the preserves of the colonial theatre. The play was entered by the University of Zambia Dramatic Society (Unzamdrams) for the 1969 annual Theatre Association of Zambia (TAZ) Festival, sponsored by the predominantly white theatre clubs. Because of its sharp criticism of white colonials, both British and French, and of the present, neo-colonial Black bourgeoisie in Africa, Houseboy aroused some controversy when it was performed during the festival. The most significant development stemming from the whole endeavour, however, is that the production, which integrated popular elements of music and dance, eventually toured the Lusaka[59] townships making contact with the township masses. It was this event that led to, and inspired the formation of Chikwakwa Theatre.

Judging from the professed aims that guided the Chikwakwa Theatre one can conclude that the theatre and those behind it were indisputably progressive. Though we cannot contest the claims by the practitioners of this theatre and the trend it represents to a basic progressive consciousness, we must question their integrity as practitioners of a "people's theatre." This we shall do by looking closely and critically at Etherton's article.

This article, which betrays the reformist tendencies similar to those shown by Penina Muhando in her approach to modern African theatre, reflects more the eagerness of a practitioner who only wishes to transform theatre in society, rather than the whole society with it, and revolutionising the theatre into a weapon for the masses. So long as his only goal is to transform the theatre, whatever changes the enlightened theatre practitioner may want to institute, reformers like Etherton will always remain at the edge of a truly People's Theatre, and will only end up promoting a theatre that is primarily divorced from the initiative of the masses (this is of course contrary to the illusions and hullaballoo created by Etherton and others that such a theatre is being driven by the initiative of the masses, instead of being what it is, a preserve of the petty-bourgeois experimentalist, detached from the heart of popular issues). Etherton implies in his article that theatre in Zambia, Chikwakwa in particular, is totally progressive just because it deals with the experiences and problems of the masses. However, we have evidence from the article that Etherton is merely attempting to idealise a type of theatre that is in reality a cultural limb of the neocolonial petty-bourgeoisie in Zambia. Indicating the political nature of his theatre in Zambia (and to Etherton, being political is equal to being "progressive," "revolutionary"), Etherton remarks, with an implied endorsement of President Kannda's "Humanism":[60] "Whatever one does to link the theatre to the prevailing ideology of Humanism and to cultural revival, is political."[61] His acknowledgement of "Humanism" as it relates to the new theatre can be likened to the endorsement given to Tanzania's policies of Ujamaa[62] by the Post-Arusha Declaration Tanzanian dramatists. "Humanism" is a product of idealist thinking, which seeks to mystify the masses by posturing as a revolutionary ideology. Thus, for example, under the inspiration of "Humanism," Chikwakwa Theatre has put on plays like Kazembe and The Portuguese (performed in 1971, unpublished), and J.P. Clark's Ozidi,[63] R.S. Easmon's The New Patriots[64] and Pat Maddy's Yon Kon[65] (performed in 1972), plays which though chosen because they powerfully experiment with African content and forms, and because they contaqn some social criticism (which is harmless), do not constitute any threat to the architects of "Humanism," the petty-bourgeois ruling class.

Now that we have examined one of its sister trends, the new theatrical scene in Tanzania can be seen in a clearer perspective. Besides examining the experiences that have preoccupied Penina Muhando and others, we shall also critically examine some of the theoretical writings covering theatre in Tanzania, assessing their effectiveness and usefulness.

Although the new forms of non-colonial theatre consciously inspired by the 1967 Arusha Declaration aimed to be country-wide, indigenously rooted theatrical expression (e.g. in improvised skits on immediate topical issues, vichekesho[66] and Ngonjera[67]), it was at the University of Dar-es-Salaam that the new trend was most visible and best recorded. To propel the trend forward, the Department of Theatre Arts, for example mounted two landmark productions, one of Ebrahim Hussein's Kinjeketile[68] in 1970, and another of Muhando's Hatia[69] in 1971. Both plays are considered to be good examples of popular and socially relevant theatre; for these reasons they were performed widely and one of them, Hatia, was taken on an extensive national tour. In order to strike roots for the new theatre, the Department also undertook a task that has led to controversy about the definition of traditional theatre: research into traditional cultures as one of the sources for basic formal material. The course, "Traditional Forms of Theatre in Africa," was set up to encourage student research under Penina Muhando's direction. The first student research reports were compiled in 1975, and these consisted mainly of recordings of traditional forms, customs and ceremonies. The students showed some confusion as to whether in their essence the items treated in the research (customs, ceremonies and rituals) constituted actual theatre. They tottered and faltered in their assessment of the relevance of their observations to modern Tanzanian theatre. They ended up with the conclusion that since the ceremonies, rituals, etc. contained some theatrical and dramatic elements, they necessarily were theatre. This limitation resulted from Muhando's similar approach to the interpretation of traditional elements as they relate to theatre. In her paper which she is presently revising, "Traditional African Theatre with Special Reference to Tanzania" (unpbulished, 1971), she describes as theatre various traditional cultural activities such as "ancestor worship, initiation rites, post-burial rituals, birth of twins, storytelling, rainmaking dance . . .".[70] She goes on listing other activities and proceeds to justify all of them as theatre. It is true that the artistic performances found in traditional ceremonies, rituals and customs are beyond all doubt rich in spicy theatrical and dramatic ingredients that provide a potential for theatre, but one cannot go along with Muhando in indiscriminately dumping all of them as theatre. One has to regard traditional performance as a source of raw materials, and not as a tree of ripe dramatic fruit ready for effortless picking. (In her plays, this limitation has created a serious handicap for Muhando. Some of her experimentation with traditional theatrical material has maintained a rather crude and non-sparkling quality, lacking in ingenuity and sophistication.)

Encouraging student and staff research into the local cultural heritage was not the only way the Department extended its scope of activity beyond the University; the Department also encouraged and organised the students to involve themselves practically in theatre with groups outside the University in the correct belief that the growth of the new theatre can only be guaranteed, not through pretentious theoretical pronouncements, but through practical work which embraces as large a segment of the masses as possible. It was out of this practical involvement in theatrical activities in schools that I wrote the paper, "The Present Aspects and the Future of Education Theatre in Post-Arusha Declaration Tanzanian Primary Schools" (unpublished, 1975).[71] In the paper, I not only made critical observations on theatre in Primary Schools, but also ventured to give suggestions about how the quality and relevance of theatre in schools can be improved. (However, despite the significance of the paper as a product of a hearty and concrete involvement in theatre, the rashness in some of the conclusions I made on certain ideological and technical points have thwarted much of the positive thrust of the paper.)

Much more could be said about the role of the University of Dar-es-Salaam, but it is necessary instead to take a wide angle look at the new theatrical scene in Tanzania. This will involve a look at some articles devoted to encouraging more social and cultural relevance of theatre in Tanzania, and will yield further useful insights into the developments that have given birth to Muhando's plays and the artistic evolution they embody.

The first article we shall examine is "Drama in Tanzanian Schools"[72] by Farouk Topan and John Cathew which is a product of observations they made as adjudicators in an Annual Youth Drama Festival held in Dar-es-Salaam in 1969 where the entries consisted of both Swahili and English plays. That the two decided to commit to print their views as adjudicators, to comment broadly on Tanzanian theatre, instead of merely giving passing oral comments on the technical calibre of the plays as other adjudicators usually did in drama competitions, is significant, because it shows a change of focus from the festival as a dramatic "football match" to the festival as a means of stimulating the growth of national theatre.

The authors began by noting, on the basis of what they had seen in the festival, the seriousness and sense of purpose which the schools had started to attribute to theatre, and the great amount of theatre that goes unrecorded in schools. The festival, according to the article, marked an improvement in Tanzanian theatre. Whereas two years previously all the plays entered for a similar festival were European (meaning British) in content and authorship, in 1969, of the ten English plays entered, the authors happily noted, seven had African content and were written by Africans, most of whom had thrown off the European strait jacket. In spite of this "progressive" breeze, the authors lamented, the plays still found themselves under the stuffy tyranny of the picture frame set, the curtain, the European "naturalism," and the frigid detachment of the audience from the action. With that observation, the two critics went on to mount criticism on the presence of colonial theatrical values found even in the plays written in the indigenous Kiswahili, castigating their authors for being locked within an ignorance of other theatrical techniques and experiences besides those from outmoded European traditions. Urging the return to traditional theatre for creative regeneration, the authors adivsed these playwrights to draw their content from the indigenous environment so that, instead of writing abstractly for publication, they could address themselves to a receptive local audience.

Though the article's criticism of the colonial theatrical values is a good indication of the progressive aesthetic consciousness that has been seeping into Post-Arusha Declaration theatre, the great satisfaction with which the authors greeted the "improvements" they cited was hardly justified. Neither the fact that a play has been written by an African rather than a European, nor the claim that the play has African content (which can mean anything, anyway), can justify the automatic assumption by the writers that progress had necessarily been achieved in Tanzania. Such an assumption can be equated, for example, with someone asserting that one is progressive because he is an African.

"Maendeleo ya Fasihi ya Kiswahili Upande wa Michezo ya Kuigiza" (The Development of Swahili Literature: Drama),[73] by Saifu Kiango attempts comprehensive survey of theatre in Tanzania. Although the paper fails to cover the area in any depth, it remains a genuine and useful effort for it records some of the theatrical activities that have transpired out of the rejection of the colonial theatre, activities that have been ignored for allegedly being of "low" standard.[74] Repudiating the colonial legacy, Kiango breaks out into a broader definition of theatre that can apply to the new theatrical expression, a definition that recognises, for instance, the basic existence of theatre in the traditional socieites: the hunter in a traditional dance masquerading as a hunted animal, the imitation of life by a traditional mimist, and children playing adults in the dust, are some of the examples he gives to point to a new definition of theatre relevant to Tanzania, at the same time refuting the claims that theatre is only written drama. Next, Kiango mentions, rather than surveys, with the exception of Vichekesho (see note 66), the various theatrical activities that exist in today's Tanzania as an alternative to the colonial theatre, including in his list Vichekesho, Ngonjera (see note 67), dance dramas, mime by semi-professional troupes, and production based on literary drama by the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. Although the writer skims over some of the activities he surveys, on the whole he seems to evince a fairly good knowledge about non-written theatre in both the traditional society and present-day Tanzania. The weakest part of his article is his review of the written drama, to which he devotes very little effort, picking up plays at random and discussing them on the level of plot and theme without applying any critical or comparative approach. Given the rapid rate at which new plays are coming out, it is unfortunate that Kiango has chosen to concentrate on other aspects of Tanzanian drama at the expense of written drama.[75]

If Kiango's paper has been unable to fulfill its aim of comprehensively surveying the theatre in Tanzania, it deserves at least the credit of being honest in reflecting on some of its progressive features in a truthful way. The same cannot quite be said of Bob Leshoai's "Tanzania-Socialist Theatre," an article which is full of superficial analyses of, and unjustified claims and generalisations about the state of theatre in Tanzania, leading to an idealisation of it. Typical of the trend of opportunist commentators who see a socialist face on every theatre production in Tanzania, Leshoai peddles the claim that Tanzania has already arrived at a "socialist" theatre, thanks to the hard working and committed government leaders! Unhesitatingly, crowning a socialist cap on Tanzanian theatre, he generalises:

> A careful look at the theatre in Tanzania, its drama, its music, dance and even its art, will clearly show that it expresses the socialist ideals . . . Tanzania has been positively involved in creating a socialist state . . .[76]

Without giving a full analysis of their true political function and their aesthetic makeup to justify the claims made above, he ascribes a socialist role to activities like traditional dances, Ngonjera and songs (which praise the leaders!). What matters to him seems to be not the quality of these activities, but the fact that they provide the quantitative unqualified evidence he thinks is sufficient to prove that theatre in Tanzania is socialist. His observation about its political nature is, however, correct. It is true, as he says, that "The Tanzanians have come to accept the fact that their theatre must be both entertaining and instructive with emphasis on its value as an educational medium."[77] But what is the content of the education served through this theatre? Leshoai fails or ignores to explore the content of this theatre and instead ends up spewing out hollow glorifying platitudes.

Any analysis of the political content of drama and theatre in Tanzania must be done in the context of the philosophy of Ujamaa, which

Leshoai does not do critically. Ujamaa has influenced not only Penina Muhando but also many playwrights who desire to render their works socially relevant, addressing them towards the problems of the common man. However, in spite of the good effects of Ujamaa, one can hardly share Leshoai's sweeping optimism that,

> The future of Tanzanian theatre is very bright because the theatre finds inspiration and direction from the well-thought out and clearly directed policies of the country. The ship of state has a clearly mapped out course, and the chances of it foundering are slim, and so the artists also are bound to have a clear vision of the role they must play in the society . . .[78]

Leshoai offers no criticism of the idealist policies of Ujamaa, nor of the dramatists and artists who have fallen under the spell of its moralist content. Any criticism of theatre in Post-Arusha Declaration must of necessity include some criticism of the ideology that inspires it. The focus on Muhando's role which will take place more in the next chapter will be characterised by such criticism.

However, before going on to the next two chapters for a direct analysis of Penina Muhando and her works, it is necessary to look at some examples of the Ujamaa-inspired drama in Tanzania which neither Kiango nor Leshoai has passed in critical review. Such drama, having rejected the content of colonial drama, focuses on social issues and the problems of the masses as they relate to the policies of Ujamaa. Ready examples of such drama are Ngalimecha Ngahyoma's Kijiji Chetu (Our Village),[79] and K.K. Kahigi's and A.A. Ngemera's Mwanzo wa Tufani (The Beginning of the Storm).[80]

Kijiji Chetu tackles the problems confronting an Ujamaa village (cooperative village) dedicated to building Ujamaa. Kizito, Pinduo, and the chairman failing to conform to the accepted Ujamaa norms in the village, constitute the major problem that preoccupies the villagers. Kizito and Pinduo refuse to put in their fair share of work, while the chairman is discovered to have amassed a large amount of wealth at the expense of the village. Following heated discussions the villagers reach a decision to expel the three offenders.

Mwanzo wa Tufani which is dramatically and thematically feeble, is an attempt to reflect the struggle between the exploited and their exploiters in the aftermath of the Arusha Declaration. The exploiting class is represented by Kitambi, owner of a number of trucks, houses and farms. The exploited classes include his underpaid workers led by his houseboy, Kazimoto, and several unemployed layabouts. The struggle is drastically compromised at the end of the play when the exploited classes concede to have a "reasonable" dialogue with Kitambi as a way of resolving the class conflicts between the exploited and their exploiters.

Both plays deal directly with the ideology and practices of Ujamaa, faithfully expressing its moral content, and sharply opposing its ideals with anti-Ujamaa or non-Ujamaa values. Penina Muhando's works can be put generally alongside these two examples, although her works reflect the influence of Ujamaa less directly than the two plays above. With the two examples demonstrating the question of social relevance which Muhando is greatly concerned with, it is time to enjoy a direct encounter with the person we have been stalking so far in our discussions about African, East African and Tanzanian theatre, all of which form a pertinent part in the study of Penina Muhando.

CHAPTER III

INTRODUCTION OF THE PLAYWRIGHT

Our examination of Penina Muhando will start off with a presentation and discussion of some biographical facts pertinent to the study of her works; facts about the social and cultural milieu in which she was born and raised, the nature of her upbringing within traditional values, and later under the tutelage of colonial educators. Such facts will help us in determining the depth of her involvement in the imported theatre and in explaining her preference for traditional theatrical sources. We shall also look at her artistic development towards a rejection of non-indigenous drama in favour of the Ujamaa-related drama. Tracing her evolving views on theatre, we shall assess her gradual commitment towards providing theatrical innovations, and her efforts to use theatre to induce a moral consciousness in the public for social reform. The chapter will end with a presentation of the outline summaries of her plays.

Penina Muhando was born in 1949 in Eastern Tanzania, the home of her ethnic group, the Wakaguru. In 1946, three years before Muhando was born, the United Nations (under the pretense of looking after the welfare of a "growing child" -- Tanganyika) had reinforced British power over Tanganyika by placing it under trusteeship. Thus colonialized, Tanganyika became known as the "Tanganyika Protectorate."

In spite of the strong influences of colonial values emanating from the school and the church, Muhando was nevertheless able to grow up largely under the tutelage of the traditional ways. Muhando's parents were both well-educated. Her father, after completing standard ten, an enviable level for an African at that time, became a clerk and later a teacher in various missionary primary schools. Muhando's mother was educated to the standard six level, a remarkable achievement for an African woman at that time. Despite this success achieved by Muhando's parents, "their colonial education and colonial religion did not have a strong enough influence to stop them bringing up their children according to tradition . . ."[81]. Even Muhando's paternal grandfather, an archdeacon of the Anglican church, the predominant religion among the Wakaguru, would not be swayed away from the traditional lifestyle, in spite of opposition from the church.

The conflict in cultures arising out of colonialism has affected the cultural outlook in Muhando's plays, a point that will be further discussed. She consciously employs and expresses the traditional environment in order to reject the remnants of the colonial cultural legacy, and also in order to form closer links with her audience, the majority of whom still live according to native traditions. This tendency towards traditional culture began during Muhando's childhood, as she points out:

> My colonial religion-cum-education emphasized that it was sinful for Christians to participate in traditional dances. But dancing was part and parcel of life in my village. Every time there was a dance I could not resist to participate but my Christian consciousness was telling me it was wrong. Fortunately, my traditional forces always won and I participated.

Other artistic experiences she had under traditional culture have also had a creative impact on her productions and her approach to social issues. An example of this can be seen in a charming account in which she describes how her mother contributed to her interest and taste in art at an early age:

> I remember her spending most of the day singing while working. I used to sing with her as we went about doing household chores. What I liked best were the lullabies she sang to my young brothers and sisters . . . I remember how I used to strive to sing the lullabies as well and as creatively as my mother did. I tried it on my brothers and sisters when I took care of them and I remember the great satisfaction I used to get when they slumbered to sleep on effect of these lullabies. I now do that with even greater satisfaction on my own kids. I think I started appreciating the effects of art from that small age.

Given the strong role played by the church and school among the Wakaguru, it was only a question of time before Penina Muhando was sucked into the colonial educational system. She started attending a day school at the age of six. From the age of ten she was placed in the hands of boarding schools where her exposure to traditional art and culture further diminished, replaced by an introduction to colonial values and theatrical traditions.

She participated with enthusiasm in various cultural activities organised under the colonial cultural program, a strange menu consisting of the maypole dance, "country" dance, the scottish dance and square dancing, all claiming superiority over the "native" dances. In the area of written drama she participated in productions of Shakespeare in such plays as Comedy of Errors, Taming of the Shrew and Othello, and dramatisations of Snow White and Cinderella. These plays were not expected to contain any educational value or to have any social relevance. According to her, such drama (and all drama in general) was introduced into schools because:

> These Englishmen [the colonial teachers] were looking for something to pass their time with during their idle

> moments. They thought that drama was the thing to do . . . It was easy to introduce it in schools, the majority of which were boarding schools where there was a ready group of people to take part . . . The plays performed were invariably written by the English . . .[82]

Written drama was also introduced into schools through the study of English literature. Muhando took part in organising and participating in *Vichekesho* (see note 66) which partly owe their origin to the introduction of written drama. *Vichekesho* was a reflection of the way written drama was received. Because the written drama introduced had a content meaningless to the Tanzanian cultural environment, and because many could not understand the cultural traditions, values and symbols embodied in it, drama was considered good only for laughs, for superficial entertainment, and even to this day, drama and theatre in Tanzania are popularly misconceived as *Vichekesho*. However, it was the colonial-inspired written drama, especially Shakespeare, that, even after Independence, was presented as the only valid theatrical experience in the schools. To some degree this assumption still remains and is an obstacle to the experimentation with other theatrical innovations.

With the narrow conception of theatre she acquired in the schools she attended, Muhando was admitted in 1968 to the Department of Theatre Arts as an undergraduate student. This was a year after the Arusha Declaration, when the Department had already started to exercise a serious skepticism and examination of the colonial legacy in theatre. This marked the start of a more enlightened view of theatre for Muhando. She describes one of the moments in the process of this enlightenment which was a lecture given by one of her teachers in which he

> spoke highly of the Tanganyika Textile Theatre Group -- an amateur group attached to a textile company

> which I had seen staging Vichekesho. I did not understand why the Professor valued this group above all the others which were staging Shakespearian classics in the Western theatre conventions.[83]

After a long discussion with the Professor after class, Muhando admits: "I realised how wrong I had been all along . . . I realised that theatre was not all Shakespeare." Another strong factor which influenced Muhando's definition of theatre was the introduction in 1967 of the concept of "Education For Self-Reliance" originated by President Nyerere, as part of the Arusha Declaration policies. At the time she entered the University, intense debates were already going on as to how best to put the policy into practice. "Education For Self-Reliance" was aimed at making schools strong outposts for the establishment of Ujamaa by encouraging them to engage in productive education that incorporated the ethic of practical work and self-reliance. The new concept which was soon converted into a concrete policy had some influence on Tanzanian cultural life; it reinforced and consolidated the trend of cultural nationalism that had started with independence, a trend which according to Muhando "advocated the promotion of values with roots in the soil of Tanzanian culture."[84] As a result of this policy ("Education For Self-Reliance"), she goes on to say ,

> Schools started to practice Self-Reliance, not only in their lessons and in economic production, but also in culture. Tanzanian culture grew in value as the masses realised that they should stop emphasizing foreign values, and start concentrating more on promoting their traditional cultures.[85]

From the enlightenment she enjoyed from her peers at the University, and under the influence of "Education For Self-Reliance," Muhando began writing plays with social relevance, plays that portray Tanzanian problems and social life. From her writing experiences,she has developed a stand which asserts that the role of modern African theatre should be to seek better communication with the masses, and that writers must make their works easily accessible to them in style, content and form, for she believes that the dramatist ought to be part and parcel of the socio-economic struggles of Tanzanian society. Given her commitment to write first and foremost for a Tanzanian audience, and not an international "universal" audience, it is no wonder that for Muhando, the question of whether or not to write in the indigenous language (a problematic question for many African writers), has never been an issue -- all of her plays are written in Kiswahili, a language spoken by more than 90% of the Tanzanian population.

The effectiveness of any theatre can only be truly fostered through the dramatist's practical involvement in as many aspects of it as possible. Although Muhando has not always had occasion and time to broaden herself out into all the stages of theatrical production, she can not be called an "armchair" playwright. Whenever possible she has participated in the practical realisation of her plays, besides taking part generally in other theatrical activities. One example that we can readily cite is Hatia, her most successful play, which she wrote as an undergraduate. Taking active part in its production, closely observing its progress, she was able to rewrite the play several times into a version that was later taken on a national tour. After joining the teaching staff in the Department of Theatre Arts in 1971, first as a Teaching Assistant and later as a full lecturer, her contributions to modern African theatre grew, and learning from the example of Hatia which had been tested against the tastes of a Tanzanian audience, she wrote three other plays. As will be seen in the discussion of her plays, Muhando's works are meant to be experiments in opening up new possibilities for Tanzanian theatre. She conducts these experiments in order to determine what kind of themes, forms, rhythms, language patterns, action, dramatic situations, and characterisations will create a potent theatre with mass appeal and popularity.

In scholarship, her contribution is still slim though significant and on the increase. She has written on the development of theatre in Tanzania and the various forms practiced there in a book she co-authored with Ndyanao Balisidya, a colleague with whom she normally collaborates on various undertakings concerning the literary and theatrical culture of Tanzania. The book, Fasihi na Sanaa za Maonyesho (Literature and Theatre) is divided into two sections, one on theatre by Muhando and the other on Swahili literature by Balisidya. The book is an important scholarly landmark, not because it is flawlessly comprehensive or dazzlingly insightful, but because nothing of its type was ever written before in Swahili, combining two separate but interdependent fields. Commenting on the poverty of current literary and dramatic criticism in Tanzania which fails to examine its subjects within the comprehensive contexts of the traditional arts and of historical development, and which only deals with individual parts of its subjects, a reviewer introducing the book remarks:

> This book is intended to fill this gap [limitation in criticism]. Our critics [the authors], researching in depth and from a historical perspective our literature and theatre arts have raised criticism expressed in Kiswahili to a higher rung. This book will benefit teachers, secondary school and college students and all lovers of literature and theatre.[86]

In the section she deals with, Muhando first attempts to define theatre according to the cultural conditions surrounding it in Tanzania, and then goes on to trace its development and its varying nature through three main headings: pre-colonial, traditional theatre; pre-independence theatre; and post-independence theatre. Through such order Muhando gives a good basic picture of theatre in Tanzania, and even though the picture is underexposed at times, one can enjoy a fairly good acquaintance with Tanzania's theatre scene from the wealth of information contained in the book. Her other publication is the article, "Modern African Theatre with Special Emphasis on East Africa" (see note 3) in which she traces the various movements, trends and activities in various parts of Africa that are bent on replacing the colonial theatre with modern African theatre which is still in the process of creation. Briefly, she also notes their achievements and their shortcomings. Her unpublished writings include, an M.A. thesis "Music in Tanzanian Traditional Theatre: The Kaguru as a Case Study," (see note 4), and "Traditional African Theatre with Special Reference to Tanzania," (see note 12).

The thesis is based on an investigation of various Kaguru traditional ceremonies and rituals, religious functions and customs (within the context of their communal character) and the artistic performances in them, focusing on how music has been used theatrically in the performances. Besides exploring the way in which music is used, the article, which we shall discuss at some length because of its important weaknesses, primarily constitutes an attempt to assert that, contrary to what the detractors of African drama claim,[87] theatre does exist in definite forms in traditional Africa. The attempt is, however, unconvincing because in her eagerness to prove her point, Muhando only succeeds in weakening her case by uncritically lumping together as theatre all types of traditional ceremonial and ritual activities she comes across. She cites several theatrical elements: symbolism, action, performer, audience, dialogue and costume, and concludes that because these elements are present in the traditional cultural activities she mentions in her paper, the performances necessarily constitute a theatre which is different from the European theatre in the way it makes use of these elements. She does not pause to consider that the elements she has selected to base her claims on, can be found even outside the theatre in numerous other situations, and are not so unique to the theatre that they can provide a precise definition. In spite of the looseness with which it handles the definition of theatre, Muhando's paper is important, first because it has stimulated a profitable debate which still rages in the Department of Theatre Arts concerning a definition of African traditional theatre, and secondly, because it has clearly acknowledged the differences between the modern and the traditional and has demonstrated the need for new definitions. In her later writings she argues for the necessity to acknowledge these differences

> . . . so that we do not conclude that because our forms of the theatre are different from those of the European theatre, ours do not constitute theatre [which] will be like saying because Tatu's dress has a collar and Pili's is collarless, Tatu's is not a real dress.[88]

Muhando's position in present day Tanzania is that of a moral evangelist. She is on a campaign of social reform which she hopes will be animated by theatrical appeals intended to awaken the spectators to a sense of responsibility for, and moral commitment to the welfare of society. She believes that

> . . . theatre has a more important function than mere entertainment it is an *educational* and *correctional* medium, to chastise and *correct society, a tool to* ensure *social harmony, the harmony that we find in traditional societies*.[89] [emphasis mine]

Muhando's moralistic approach to social problems, a characteristic of not only her drama but most Ujamaa-inspired drama, is unmistakable. This will be one of the principle features that will be focused upon in the next chapter.

However, before we go on to a direct discussion of Muhando's dramatic contributions to Tanzanian theatre, we first must get acquainted as much as possible with what her plays are all about. We begin with an elaborate listing of the plays in chronological order, and follow with a plot outline summary of each play in detail.

Between the period 1968 and 1974 Penina Muhando wrote five plays, all of which have been published. Heshima Yangu (My Dignity),[90] which she wrote in 1968, deals with the themes of forbidden love, dishonesty and adultery. A father refuses to grant permission for marriage between his daughter and her lover on the grounds that the boy is a bastard. However, the father's real reason is revealed when he is dramatically unmasked at the end of the play: the boy is his son from an illicit affair he had had with the boy's mother twenty-five years previously.

Hatia (Guilt) (see note 69), which she wrote in 1969 treats a common and controversial problem in Tanzania, unwed mothers. It centres on a village girl who goes to the city to work. She gets pregnant by a man who denies responsibility for the pregnancy and rejects her.

Tambueni Haki Zetu (Recognise Our Rights)[91] written in 1972 dramatises an historical event, an inter-ethnic armed conflict, and is a parable about the necessity for armed struggle by the masses against aggression and oppression. The play also presents moral justification for such struggles.

Pambo (the name of the principle character),[92] written in 1974, is a castigation of a section of Tanzania's petty bourgeoisie, the University graduates, for their obsession with material goods, their neocolonial outlook, and also for their arrogance and parasitic existence.

Talaka Si Mke Wangu (You are no Longer my Wife, I Divorce You),[93] was also written in 1974. It centres on Kona who has been jailed for theft. Through flashback, Kona's past, his childhood in particular, is recapitulated and presented to explain and justify Kona's conversion to crime.

Detailed Outline Summaries

Heshima Yangu

Scene 1: It is the home of Mzee Issa, and Rukia, his daughter is winnowing pounded corn. Hadija, a friend, enters and brings up for conversation the secret love affair between Rukia and Salum, a boy from the same village. Hadija is skeptical as to whether Mzee Issa will grant permission for a marriage. Hadija exits and Hamza, Rukia's brother, enters to urge his sister to hold off on marriage until Salum has accumulated enough money to ensure a secure and comfortable life, but Hadija says that she is not interested in Salum for money. Mzee Issa, overhearing the conversation makes a furious entry and vehemently forbids Rukia not to even think of marriage with salum, who is a bastard, a fact that Mzee Issa claims would undermine his reputation and dignity in the village. Rukia and her brother plead with their father -- they ask him to think of Salum in terms of his individual merits and not in terms of something he is not responsible for, but Mzee Issa is adamant.

Scene 2: In a secret meeting between the two lovers, Rukia tells Salum about her father's stand. Before Salum can reply, Mzee Issa breaks in on them and accuses Rukia of indecent behaviour, of carrying on with Salum in public, and Rukia runs off, denouncing her father. Mzee Issa tells Salum of his stand, and explains that the reason for his stand is because Salum is a bastard who will have no one to represent him in the wedding ceremony but Salum points out that the reason is not strong enough. Mzee Issa accuses Salum of being disrespectful of traditions, and orders him to stop seeing his daughter forthwith. Tatu, Asha and Hadija, friends of Rukia, pass by gossiping about the forbidden marriage.

Scene 3: At home with his mother Salum dejectedly confesses his love for Rukia to his mother, Mama Salum. Before he can go on to tell her about Mzee Issa's refusal for a marriage, Mzee Issa enters. Abruptly, Salum walks out leaving his mother puzzled and angry at the apparent rudeness. Mzee Issa summarily informs Mama Salum of the love between Salum and Rukia and their desire to get married, and tells of the threat posed to his dignity if the marriage should take place. Mzee Issa's opposition to the marriage stems from the fact that in reality, he is Salum's father, Salum having been born a bastard due to an illicit affair between Mama Salum and Mzee Issa twenty-five years previously. During that period he had been threatening Mama Salum that he would kill her if she ever revealed the truth, ruining his reputation in the village. Mama Salum, outraged by Mzee Issa's hypocrisy, and filled with loathing for the man who had held a knife to her throat for twenty-five years, reveals the secret to Salum and Rukia who have entered during the argument between Mama Salum and Mzee Issa. The exclamations by the two young lovers end the play.

Hatia

Scene 1: A distraught pregnant Cheja is stumbling around the streets of Dar es Salaam. She runs into her boyfriend, Juma Bakari, who is responsible for making her pregnant. Tearfully, Cheja tells him about the terrible news, but Juma Bakari arrogantly thrusts her away, and warns her not to name him as the father of the baby. He advises her to name Sembuli, for whom Cheja works as a house girl. Cheja has been entrusted to Sembuli who is from the same home village and therefore was trusted by Cheja's parents.

Scene 2: Cheja runs away from the city to her village in Kilosa, where Bwana Chowe, her father, has just received a letter from Sembuli about her disappearance. Bwana Chowe angrily confronts Cheja; Cheja reveals that she is pregnant and names Sembuli as the father of the baby. Bwana Chowe is outraged and calls for a baraza (conference) of the Council of Elders to discuss the issue.

Scene 3: The baraza is divided into two sides; on one side there are Bwana Chowe and Cheja's relatives and on the other, Sembuli's relatives. The two sides are involved in an argument concerning Sembuli's guilt and the steps to be taken against him. Sembuli is found guilty and is required to pay a fine to repair the damage done. Unexpectedly, Sembuli arrives and vehemently insists on his innocence, creating an impasse which is to be resolved through an oath-taking ritual to determine whether or not he is guilty.

Scene 4: The ritual consists of retrieving two stones from the bottom of a boiling pot of goat's oil. If innocent, Sembuli is told, he will succeed in retrieving the stones. Sembuli refuses, and throws the proceedings into an uproar by naming Mkami, Cheja's brother who had visited him in the city, as the one responsible for Cheja's pregnancy. This leads to a fight between Sembuli's side and Cheja's side.

Scene 5: The whole village becomes involved in the fight. Cheja, ashamed of herself for causing all the trouble in the village, runs away into the forest, bent on suicide. She is pursued and caught. Weeping she confesses that she had lied about Sembuli.

Scene 6: The two sides call a truce and count their wounded. Cheja names Juma Bakari as the cause of her plight and asks to be forgiven for having lied, resolving to join an Ujamaa village to redeem herself. The elders call for reconciliation, a cleansing ceremony and compensations to injured parties. Sembuli goes back to the city intent on seeking out deviants like Juma Bakari for rehabilitation, and the elders settle down for pombe (drinks) to celebrate the restitution of "harmony" and "justice."

Tambueni Haki Zetu

Scene 1: The setting is the entrance to Kuzimu (land of the spirits) and Mundewa, who was a leader of the Watone ethnic group and is now dead, appears to seek entry into Kuzimu, to join his ancestors, to gain "promotion"and to become a spirit. Sekulu, the gatekeeper, acting on behalf of the other spirits, refuses him entry, accusing him of having caused bloodshed and committed violence during his reign, and is therefore unclean. The truth is Mundewa had led the Watone in a struggle against the Wakusa, a wandering people who had been generously welcomed and given land by Mondota, Mundewa's predecessor, to live in peaceful neighbourliness. Mondota had also appointed the Waboma, a powerful neighbouring ethnic group, to play the role of the honest broker and be the custodians of the "eternal" peace between the Watone and the Wakusa. In time, however, the Wakusa renounced the role of the "good guest"and, supported by the Waboma, started raids for women and cattle against their benefactors, forcing the Watone to defend themselves. The spirits, however, insist on Mundewa's wrongdoing; they feel he should have been more tolerant. In defense, Mundewa requests a re-enactment of the events leading to the armed conflict between the two groups. The spirits, who have the power to conjure past events, agree.

Scene 2: In front of Mundewa's house, Fonga, a prominent Mtone, is pointing at a stretcher bearing his son, angrily railing against Mundewa, exhorting him to initiate some punitive action against the Wakusa. Fonga accuses Mundewa and his lieutenant, Jumbe, of inaction. Fonga's tirade is joined by the screams of his wife who begins to wail over the wounded boy. Mundewa decides to call an emergency meeting of the Council of Elders.

Scene 3: Nike, Mundewa's drummer, flirting with Kauye, the village beauty, beats the drum to convene a meeting of all Watone. As the Watone assemble, Gota, another prominent Mtone, rushes in; he has just had a narrow escape from an ambush set by the Wakusa. The meeting starts and soon turns stormy, with every Mtone clamouring for war. Mundewa and his assistants moderate the outrage and manage to get the Watone to agree to the formation of a self-defense movement to be called Zetu. Nono, a wealthy cattleman, opposes the formation of the movement and is denounced as a traitor. Kauye bursts in, weeping that her aunt has been set upon by the Wakusa. The Watone rush out.

Scene 4: An alarm from a goat's horn (a device agreed upon to alert and mobilise members of Zetu during a Wakusa raid) goes off, and the watone are seen pursuing the raiders. Splitting into small groups, the pursuers scatter to comb the forest. One of the groups catches up with the raiders, two in number, and shoot them dead with their arrows.

Scene 5: In the depth of the forest, members of Zetu celebrate the recapture of Fonga's cattle by a feast provided for by Fonga. (One of the rules of Zetu stipulates that the owner of the cattle whose recapture has been successful must slaughter a bull for those who took part in the pursuit.) Mundewa and Jumbe express their satisfaction at the success of the operation and go on to announce that the Waboma intend to stop the activities of Zetu. The Watone resolve not to waver in their cause. An alarm goes off.

Scene 6: Mundewa is anxiously waiting for the return of Gota who has been sent to spy on the Wakusa. Mundewa, who is worried, is being soothed by Nike. Finally, Gota arrives and announces that the Wakusa are planning a major attack. There is a sudden knock on the door and an official and two soldiers from the Waboma enter with an order to take Mundewa with them. When Mundewa refuses, the official shows him a document signed by Mondota when he appointed the Waboma as the custodians of the peace between the Wakusa and the Watone, and claims that the document proves the authority of the Waboma over him and the Watone. Mundewa snatches the document and tears it up. He is seized by the two soldiers and taken away.

Scene 7: The Watone are assembled to mourn their dead, victims of the raids which have increased since Mundewa's capture. The raids have gone unchallenged as the Watone fear for Mundewa who is being held hostage by the Waboma. Gota and an old man return from the Waboma where they have negotiated in vain for Mundewa's release, bringing reports of more killings by the Wakusa and the loud sounds of wailing in the places they have passed. Nono bursts in and reports that he has been raided and his cattle stolen by the Wakusa, and bids for *Zetu* to help him recapture them. He is laughed at and ridiculed by the others. He is refused help and denounced as a traitor.

Scene 8: Deep in the forest, Jumbe is addressing the Watone who have assembled for a secret meeting. Nono bursts in again to plead for help but is booed and shouted down. Mundewa makes a sudden appearance; he has escaped from his captors. His dramatic appearance is cheered by everyone. Mundewa tells of the attempts by the Waboma to force him to sign a new document in place of theone he destroyed, and tells of how he refused because he did not want to sell his land or his people into slavery. Surprised to see Nono, he asks what Nono is doing there. Amidst wild denunciations, Nono pleads again with renewed hope. After lecturing on the need to act only in self defense, Mundewa advocates the initiation of the repentant Nono into *Zetu*. An alarm goes off and everybody scatters.

Scene 9: The Watone have assembled in the forest for an initiation ceremony and oath administration for new *Zetu* members. Some are eating meat. With extreme nervousness, Nono rushes in, eager to be initiated. The oath swearing begins, interrupted suddenly by an official from the Waboma, accompanied by several soldiers who demand to have Mundewa back, and at the same time charge that the ceremony the Watone are holding is part of preparations for a war with the Wakusa. The Watone, irked by the presumptiousness of the Waboma, chase them away.

Scene 10: It is the aftermath. *Zetu* has succeeded in putting an end to the actions of their aggressors, and the Watone are now able to continue with their daily activities, free of fear and uncertainty at last. Reports have it that the Wakusa, despirited, have started to move off to new lands.

Scene 11: Back at the gate to *Kuzimu*, Mundewa is awaiting the verdict of the spirits. Sekulu peers into the interior of *Kuzimu* from where a throbbing of drums is heard, signifying the spirits' rejection of Mundewa. The spirits are still of the unbending opinion that Mundewa is guilty: first, for initiating the formation of *Zetu*, "that movement that caused so much bloodshed"; second for destroying the ancestral document that had Mondota's fingermark (signature) on it; third, for escaping rather than enduring captivity thus proving his manhood; and finally, for "chasing" the Wakusa away and showing disrespect to the Waboma, his patrons. Mundewa is enraged and embittered at such injustice. He accuses the spirits of being ignorant of the just cause of the Watone, and thrusting himself past a dumb-founded and helpless Sekulu, he defiantly gate crashes into Kuzimu.

Pambo

Scene 1: The play opens in Pambo's home. On one of the walls is a graduation gown and hat. Pambo (Ornament) is sitting in a trance as Maua (Flowers), his girlfriend enters, angrily complaining about the hot weather of Dar es Salaam. She heatedly confronts Pambo and taunts him about his lack of money and his failure to buy the things he had promised to buy when he graduated from University: a car, a radiogram, a swimming pool, etc. Pambo says nothing as Maua furiously hurls her frustrations at him. She finally storms out slamming the door, bringing Pambo out of his trance. Pambo regards the cap and gown on the wall and fondly addresses them as his bosom friends, his idols, his hopes. He bursts into a self-glorifying song, chanting, after the fashion of the traditional praise poets, his aspirations to become a propertied petty-bourgeois with all the material objects his heart desires: a swimming pool, a big office, a fat salary, lots of drink and women. Two boys, Pesa (Money) and Raha (Pleasure), enter. Pambo hypnotises them and leads them in the singing of the self-glorifying song which opens with the line, "Pambo, big shot Pambo ... ". He makes them dance too. Blaza, Wema (Goodness), Pambo's other girlfriend, and Mama Doto enter, having heard the wild singing and dancing. Dragging the two children with him, Pambo rushes out, followed by Blaza and Mama Doto. Wema is left behind. Maua enters. There is a fight between Maua and Wema, the latter accusing Maua of being evil, of going after Pambo's money and bewitching him.

Scene 2: The three runaways are deep in the forest, worn out from the many days' wanderings in the forest. Pambo is forcing onward, the children whose spirits seem to have worn thin. Baba Pambo (Pambo's father), Baba Raha (Raha's father) and Baba Pesa (Pesa's father), and Sikitu (I don't care) Pambo's brother (who is envious and bitter about his brother's educational achievements), have been pursuing the three runaways without any success. Mwindaji (Hunter), enters and aims his arrow at the three runaways, threatening to shoot if they don't stop. The three fathers protest that they don't want their sons killed, but only healed of their madness. The hunter insists that they should die, for that is the only cure for a mad person. In the end, he gives in and lowers his bow. Immediately the three runaways escape.

Scene 3: The pursuers enlist the help of the Mganga (traditional medicineman and seer), a spartan old goat, keen and purposeful and formidably versed in magical knowledge. In the meantime, the three runaways, in another part of the forest, are totally possessed and dancing frenziedly and performing skits. Pesa and Raha double up to play the various girls fleeting around in Pambo's petty-bourgeois fantasies. Pambo plays the decadent "big shot" that he is, flattering, patronising and using (abusing) the girls. They continue singing "Pambo, big shot Pambo" after the skits. As they exit, the pursuers enter. The Mganga forces the reluctant fathers into jangling njuga (ankle bells) which the runaways are also wearing, and makes them sing and dance in the fashion of the runaways. The plan is to pretend to be in agreement with the values of the runaways to lure them back to the village. The pursuers singing, dancing, whistling and jangling bells (like the runaways), head back to the village, followed by the runaways. Relentlessly, they trek back (crossing the stage, back and forth, several times) to the village. The fathers and the Mganga arrive in the village and the Mganga quickly addresses the audience (as villagers) requesting them to help cure the three runaways to bring them back into the communal womb by singing along with him in unity and solidarity. The runaways enter, surprised to see the throng of villagers (the audience) gathered and waiting for them. An altercation begins in song between the Mganga, the fathers and the villagers, and the runaways, representing the conflict between "positive, good" values of the community, and the deviant evil values advocated by Pambo. The tension mounts and gradually the three runaways are defeated, the "evil spirits" in them exorcised, mainly through the magic of the Mganga. Pesa and Raha faint. Pambo, a "rehabilitated" deviant, starts repeating the Mganga's lyrics which champion good, redemptive social values.

Talaka Si Mke Wangu

Scene 1: Kona, a prisoner is huddled in one corner of the stage that represents his cell, lamenting his condition. An askari (guard) orders him to shut up. In a flashback to Kona's childhood, we witness a fight between Mama Kona (Kona's mother) and Baba Kona (Kona's father), the latter having just issued a divorce to the former. Packing, Mama Kona taunts her former husband; she boasts that she will get herself a better husband, one who would not neglect her as Baba Kona has done. She calls out to Kona to bid him goodbye but Kona does not seem to hear her. She goes away hoping that whoever Kona's stepmother will be, she will take good care of him. Back in the cell, Kona hurls accusations at his parents, charging that they neglected him in his childhood. He charges that his mother was too busy looking after herself and his father was too busy philandering. The *askari* shuts him up.

Scene 2: Kona and the *askari* remain forzen. There is a flashback to Kona's childhood. Tabia, the stepmother, is heaping abuse on Kona, after having just walloped him. To Tabia Kona is a misfit, a no-good, problematic child, and it is all the fault of Baba Kona who has been soft on him. Under Tabia's nagging (Tabia complains that she has been left with all the burden of straightening out Kona), Baba Kona gives Kona another walloping. Back in the cell, Kona calls the audience's attention to the hardships he experienced as a child: the cruel, uncaring stepmother, hard work, pain from beatings, starvation and neglect from his father. In another flashback, Tabia complains about Kona, how lazy, slow and sloppy he is. Boko, Kona's school teacher enters and complains that Kona has not been in school for two months, and that his record in school is poor.

Scene 3: Kona and the *askari* remain frozen. There is a flashback to Kona's past, to unseen sounds of running feet and of stones landing on the ground, of a thief being pursued. The thief is stoned to the ground and is discovered to be none other than Kona. Kona, in his cell, screams out that it is because of want that he stole. The *askari* shuts him up. In a flashback, Tabia refuses to go to Kona's trial, saying that she would not accept a criminal as her stepson. She declares that Kona is an unwanted person in her house.

Scene 4: Back in prison, the *askaris* regard Kona as a hardcore trouble maker, a reject from society. Kona escapes from prison.

Scene 5: Kona's escape (and capture) is announced over Radio Tanzania, together with a notice of a seminar to deal with the rehabilitation of delinquents. Mama Kona learns of the escape and the capture. She also learns that Kona has been shot in the leg resisting capture. In prison, Kona is brought to his cell on a stretcher. At Baba Kona's home, Mama Kona accuses Tabia of bewitching Kona and hurls insults at Baba Kona who has just entered. Tabia throws herself at Mama Kona but Baba Kona separates the two women. A crowd gathers. Tabia demands a divorce saying that she is not prepared to be blamed for all of Kona's misfortunes nor will she tolerate accusations that she has bewitched him. People in the crowd debate the whole issue regarding the upbringing of children, and that of rehabilitating criminals by placing them in prison and just how effective it is. Back in his cell, Kona sings in lament over his wretched childhood. The *askari* shuts him up.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE PLAYS

Because there is a very limited amount of scholarship that has dealt with Penina Muhando's work, anyone attempting an intensive and comprehensive examination of her plays is bound to start almost from the ground level. The lack of scholarship is not surprising given the relative obscurity of Tanzanian literature and drama in the past. Coupled with this is the fact that Penina Muhando's plays are in Kiswahili and are not readily accessible to non-Tanzanian critics. Another major reason for this dearth of scholarship lies in the level of development of modern theatre criticism, low in spite of the amount of theatre production that goes on in East Africa. (There is mature theatre, but dramatic criticism is still in its infancy.) In the case of Tanzania, plays have normally been regarded merely as entertaining shows, as in cases like Vichekesho, and not as serious theatrical events with cultural and social significance. This lack of scholarship has been both qualitative and quantitative.

The little scholarship that exists has been either indifferent or ignorant of the crucial issues and features that form the essence of Muhando's work, or has merely discussed a narrow range of superficial values. The few articles and reviews that have appeared fail to illuminate the hidden aspects of her plays, like her didactic approach and the moralistic basis of the solutions she gives for social problems, things that make up her social and aesthetic outlook. The quality of this scholarship is, however, no reflection of the full scope of Muhando's efforts; she deserves much fuller treatment which this chapter aims to provide.

Before a full scale examination of her works begins, however, it is necessary to look at the criticism that has been written on them so far. This will enable us to see the type and level of criticism awareness that marks the lack of seriousness with which critics in East Africa perceive drama, and will also provide us with reference material during our examination.

Louis Mbughuni's review "Old and New Drama from East Africa. A Review of the Works of Four Contemporary Dramatists: Rebecca Njau, Ebrahim Hussein, Penina Muhando and Ngugi"[94] is useful because it gives an introduction to Penina Muhando and her works in the context of other East African dramatists. His introduction provides us with basic information about Muhando without, however, focusing in any way on the type of dramatist Muhando is, in terms of the social and moral function of her plays. He goes on to give a "review" of Tambueni Haki Zetu which merely summarises the play's plot and skims over its surface themes. The conclusions he draws about the play are superficial and random and do not bring to light any new insights beyond those that an ordinary reading of the play can bring.

Likewise, Micere Githae Mugo's "Review" of Hatia, in "Plays in Swahili: Gerishon Ngugi, Penina Muhando, and Ebrahim Hussein,"[95] is purely descriptive; it does not go beyond narrating what happens in the play and applies no real critical interpretation to it. The review is brief, too brief to capture in any depth the essence of Penina Muhando through the play. It is unable to do so because the author does not concentrate on Penina Muhando in any special way, but treats her as merely another East African playwright who writes in Kiswahili.

At best, both of these reviews simply act as indicators that something is happening in theatre and that Penina Muhando's plays are part of it. There is some value in them since they open up the area of Swahili drama to a non-Swahili-speaking audience. However, they in no way penetrate into the social meaning of Penina Muhando's plays, yet such analysis is crucial when experiments related to "socialism" are involved.

F.E.M.K. Senkoro's article "Mwamko wa Kisiasa Katika Fasihi (Political Awareness in Literature)[96] is the most meaningful piece that has thus far been written on the works of Penina Muhando. Unlike the other two writers, Senkoro chooses to deal with the political aspect of the two playwrights he discussed in his article, Penina Muhando and Ebrahim Hussein. Settling on Hatia as Muhando's best work, he proceeds to examine it from an elaborate point of view, employing a class analysis that embraces the social and historical setting of the play. Senkoro's is a positive effort since he links Penina Muhando with some contemporary ideological concerns embodied in Ujamaa, concerns about which Muhando is aware, and to which she is responding. The article judges Penina Muhando and Ebrahim Hussein to be "revolutionary" writers through examination of their respective plays, Hatia and Mashetani, and uses them as evidence for his questionable assertion that political maturity has dawned in Tanzanian literature. In optimistically regarding Hatia and its author as revolutionary, Senkoro is idealising the role of Penina Muhando, and is too hastily assigning revolutionary credentials to her. He ignores or fails to see the play within Muhando's own ideological framework, which is that of a social reformer rather than a revolutionary.

Judging from the article, Senkoro is undoubtedly a person with progressive sentiments about literature, searching for positive examples of revolutionary works of art, but seems to have analused the play merely for the convenience of his own ideals, and consequently, has given us an inaccurate picture of Muhando.

Although Muhando's plays might be thought of as morality plays because of the moral orientation in the treatment of social issues, they differ from the morality plays of the middle ages. Because, while the latter, employing moral and spiritual types, dealt with individuals in relation to God and to religious values, the former, through recognisable, pedestrian types and common moral codes, deal with actions of individuals in relation to social problems and social values. The approach applied by Muhando is intended to achieve the educational and correctional goals she has set for herself and which she feels theatre in Tanzania ought to serve. The best approach to analyse her plays and arrive at a full understanding of them would therefore be to examine them from the perspective of their moral didacticism. For moral didacticism Muhando focuses on familiar everyday types of characters who form human and moral nerve centres of her plays and who represent various problems and "vices" which threaten the welfare and the moral integrity of the community. These characters are further used by the playwright for channeling her views, reservations and judgements on the issues she deals with and for directing her moralising through them to the audience. In our examination, therefore, we shall also focus on the principle character or characters in each of the plays in chronological order as one of the means of penetrating to the essence of her drama. Muhando's experimentation with new content, technique and theatrical forms will of course form an important part of the study. This will involve a critical discussion of the quality, the extent and content of the experimentation attempted.

Heshima Yangu

Muhando's first play seems to be a mere dramatic exercise, a dramatic sketch on which to hang the plot as well as the body of the story, rather than a fully conceived play. The play exists more as a story than a drama, with characters that lack theatrical depth and vitality and who function solely to convey the author's moral lessons. Due to the lack of adequate dramatic contrivance, the characters do not breathe freely as independent artistic components. The roles are simple, literal and straightforward.

This basic weakness in dramatic construction is common to many beginning attempts to drama making in Tanzania, attempts which are motivated by the illusion that to make drama all that is necessary is the manufacture of "natural" dialogue between "natural" characters and that drama is simply an alternative means of story telling. It seems that the authors of such attempts pay no attention at all to the demands that drama must be made into a taut spring which uncoils to the audience, not with a casual or literal effect, but with a visual and metaphorical impact through subtle verbal and artificial constructions. The content, or more specifically, the story cannot exist separately from the dramatic medium through which it is conveyed to the audience. The dramatic medium and how it is employed are an inseparable aspect of the educational power of the theatre. If this medium is taken for granted and regarded simply as another method of storytelling, the playwright will fail to exploit the special capability of drama -- that of provoking the audience's intellect in the process of instructing, allowing the audience to draw its own conclusions. Heshima Yangu could have been conceived into a full length, dramatically involving play if the story outline had been regarded by the author merely as a starting point for more dramatic construction. Perhaps being Muhando's first attempt (she wrote the play when she was still an undergraduate student, during a period when she had rejected the colonial theatre which had not offered her any vital creative stimulus) the play lacks the inspiring contact which later plays were to develop with traditional cultural sources. Muhando came to use these sources as a basis for experimentation that was to lead to more dramatically engaging plays.

Yet in spite of its substantial inadequacies, Heshima Yangu is a self-contained piece and a noteworthy step towards the author's aesthetic goals of creating a morally instructive theatre. Within its limitations the play still manages to retain the moral appeal it was intended to provide, an appeal that resides mainly in its conclusion, but also in characters who have been drawn from familiar surroundings, characters of a woeful, pathetic tale. Almost all the characters are significant in conveying the moral of the story, and they are types well known to the audience since they represent common personalities from everyday reality. In Mzee Issa, for instance, the audience sees the typical tyrannical father figure who is also -- much to the satisfaction of daughters -- a scandalous hypocrit. In Salum we see the innocent and decent young man whose quest is for a happy life. In Rukia, the audience sympathises with the feeble, helpless and dependent female, what daughters are supposed to be before their fathers, especially when the question is that of marriage. But in Mama Salum, the audience is confronted by a rebellious challenging woman who is used by the author as an instrument for the implementation of social justice. The rest of the characters are of little consequence in the author's didactic schemes.

The main characters are, of course, Salum (the protagonist) and Mzee Issa (the antagonist) who act as the principal exponents of the playwright's moral teachings. As in her other plays where Muhando uses victimized individuals or individuals under socially-imposed deviancy to illustrate social injustice and malpractices, Salum in Heshima Yangu provides evidence of the general injustice within the social system. Like all of Muhando's victimised characters in all her plays, Salum in general, represents those individuals in society who are susceptible to discrimination and unfair treatment through no or only partial fault of their own. In showing this victimisation, Muhando hopes to sway the audiences' moral sentiments to curb "bad" behaviour in society. What is at stake for Salum is his "freedom" as an individual and his happiness which depends on his marriage to the woman he loves. His simple needs are in conflict with Mzee Issa's hypocritical desire for "respect" and "dignity." Rukia, Salum's appendage for expounding the theme of forbidden love, supports the author's defense of Salum. In reply to her father who forbids her marriage to Salum on the grounds that he is a bastard with no male relatives to represent him in the wedding, thus being against tradition, Rukia asks her father a moral question that presumably the audience is expected to unravel: is tradition more important than happiness? In other words, is the need to have relatives to represent Salum more important than Salum's right to choose and marry whoever he desires? Judging from Rukia's question, Salum represents the modern concept of the individual imbued with an "individuality" that has to be fulfilled (a concept which Muhando seems to believe in). On the other hand, Mzee Issa is articulating the traditional position which he manipulates for self-interest in order to save his credibility in the village. Muhando thus seems to be advocating the rights of the individual, the modern individual who is a product of the fragmentation of the classical communal traditional society. Such a fragmentation has been brought about through the introduction of capitalist human relations, and the application of bourgeois individualism in conducting social activities such as marriage. This outlook is pitted against the tyranny of tradition and is used to advocate reform of the backward traditional attitudes in society to allow for the development of individualism. It is for this reason that the love between Rukia and Salum has been portrayed with a sentimental purity, as love between two innocent individuals who want nothing more than to share their lives together. In this way the author aims to endear the victim, Salum, to the audience.

Sympathy for the victim requires the presence of the villain to whom the audience can attribute the tribulations suffered by the victim. In Heshima Yangu, the villain is Mzee Issa, victimizing both Mama Salum and her son. Mzee Issa is a respected elder in the village as well as a ten-cell leader (a grass-root level representative of the Ruling Party in Tanzania). So besides embodying traditional authority he also symbolises the political authority of a modern state, the modern ruling class. Judging from such characterisation, Muhando seems to be exposing and attacking not only ordinary villainy but, although feebly, political villainy, at the same time calling for moral measures against the sacrifice of innocent victims at the altar of a public figure's reputation.

Muhando singles out for attack the vices of hypocrisy, tyranny and adultery. And finally, in having the villain (Mzee Issa) exposed before those he has victimized to protect himself, she hopes that the old man and those like him will experience shame and remorse and transform themselves into virtuous members of society. The person who initiates this process is Mama Salum who is herself elevated from the status of victim to that of executioner, much to the satisfaction of a heroine-loving audience. Muhando seems to believe that one way of rehabilitating offenders is to have them go through moral anguish which will change their attitudes.

Hatia

The drama in this play is broader than that of Heshima Yangu and so is the scope of its action and the impact of its dramatic conflicts. The play is populated by more characters with the principal characters playing bigger roles than those in Heshima Yangu. Theatrically pleasing with higher entertainment value, Hatia demonstrates Muhando's growing craftsmanship. We might, at times, find the literalness that characterises Heshima Yangu but this is only a superficial effect. Beneath the surface of the action, Hatia throbs with theatrical liveliness which comes partly from the way Muhando has explored her dramatic subject but more through her use of traditional theatrical elements which provide new dimensions to dramatic action. The most striking element from traditional sources is that of ritual which has been used to feature the duel between Sembuli and the elders. Along with it must be mentioned the use of the Mwapishaji (oath-administrator) who later becomes the Mganga (traditional healer). Both roles represent important spiritual personages in traditional mythological beliefs. It is in the forest that the Mwapishaji has his base of operations, and it is also there that the ritual takes place and later where the fight breaks out. Thus the forest is made into a special context in which the dramatic action soars to new theatrical planes. The forest is also used extensively in Tambueni Haki Zetu and Pambo and represents a place of evil and moral disorder, a place inhabited by weird creatures, "extra-human" beings. Muhando uses these elements because they provide the play with the flavour of the traditional society and provide a setting of mystery intended to entice the audience.

The play revolves around the two principal characters, Cheja and Sembuli who the author exploits for moralising to the audience. Cheja enjoys the author's full sympathies. She is portrayed as a helpless victim much like Rukia in Heshima Yangu except that, unlike Rukia who is only an appendage to the protagonist, Cheja has a bigger role to play in conveying the author's moral concerns. Her tale, like that of Rukia and Salum, is one of pathos, one that talks of pitiable beings caught up in the vulnerable simplicity of village life. Due to the legacy of colonialism, Cheja becomes a rape victim because of the ways of city life and this shatters her illusions and violates her innocence. The city, a relatively new phenomenon, is portrayed as a place whose secrets only very few people hold a key to. It is the image of moral breakdown. Muhando cultivates the belief held by villagers that the city is something alien, evil, destructive and quite incomprehensible, a place to be avoided in favour of the serenity and simplicity of pastoral life, and the egalitarian and just life in the Ujamaa village.

Muhando's intentions are to portray the city from a moral rather than from a materialist point of view. To the village elders, who have no clear notion of city life, what has befallen Cheja is an expression of "fate." The fallen girl is a tragic figure, an unwary "antelope" snared by the strange ways of uprooted city dwellers. There is no doubt that the audience is also expected to view Cheja and her plight from a moral standpoint, to see the city through eyes clouded over by sentimental concern. What we see of the city is only a glimpse of the larger reality it represents and that is only given at the opening of the play. In the rest of the play the city is portrayed only indirectly as a distant but haunting presence.

As the play opens, the playwright immediately focuses on Cheja and her suicidal sojourn in the city. As she stumbles through the streets of Dar-es-Salaam, various elements confront her. We witness the strangulating effects of the city on her. Stepping beyond the bounds of naturalism, Muhando underlines Cheja's loneliness and insecurity by a satirical song that is mockingly sympathetic:

> Listen! Listen!
> This is not the village
> Listen! Listen!
> This is not the village (p. 8)

The image of the city is reinforced by the fisherman who warns Cheja about the city and its ways. Cheja, who has been walking in a dreamlike state not knowing where she is going, bumps into the fisherman and is startled:

> The Fisherman: . . . Eeee! Woman. It is dangerous to walk around without looking where you are going . . . ohoo. This is Dar-es-Salaam. [emphasis mine] (p. 8)

Further on, she comes across her main antagonist, Juma Bakari, the man she had so gullibly loved, who made her pregnant, and who now cruelly rejects her. Juma threatens Cheja never to name him as the father of her child. This threat is much like Mzee Issa's threat to Mama Salum. (Male chauvinism is being taken up for attack.) In case Cheja is thinking of setting her relatives on him, Juma Bakari callously discourages her:

> Juma: (laughs) . . . Where will you see me? This is Dar-es-Salaam, sister. How will you get me? [emphasis mine] (p. 8)

Thus, a host of circumstances converge on Cheja to comment on the tragedy confronting her, on her plight. Muhando, however, does not carry out an exploration into the origin of these circumstances; we are given hints about city life and its man-eating traditions but no more. The fisherman is a worker engaged in one of the economic activities of Dar-es-Salaam, a fact that is pushed to the background. As a worker in Dar-es-Salaam the fisherman has had experiences which can no doubt reveal the nature of the city to the audience, and which can show to the audience that it is not only the Chejas who suffer at the hands of the oppressive social system but also individuals like the fisherman who are victims of economic oppression. Likewise Juma Bakari is treated only as the fatal instrument that forks out the bitter portion to the protagonist. He is a drifter, a rolling current in the apparently faceless ocean that the city is imagined to be by the village folk. But as the audience we might demand to know: what does he do for a living? Is he a worker? Is he unemployed? How does he derive his attitude?

The presentation of Cheja in the opening scene provides the audience with only those facts that aid in the portrayal of Cheja as a victim to be pitied. The facts we are left with are: Cheja's pregnancy and her rejection by Juma Bakari. All the other facts pertaining to her occupation and the conditions that have made her move from the village to the city are only mentioned as background elements and are given no significance. Cheja has been forced to leave her village to go and seek employment in the city apparently to obtain money that is sorely needed back home in her village. Her departure constitutes a gigantic sacrifice as she is needed at home to help her mother Bi Chowe, who is aged and finds it a strain to perform the domestic chores. Bi Chowe laments about the conditions surrounding Cheja's departure:

> . . . All this is because of poverty. If my daughter had not gone to work in Dalisalama [Dar-es-Salaam] now all the work would be done for me. (p. 10)

On a social and economic level, Cheja embodies much more than the effects of the immorality of the city on helpless, innocent individuals. She stands for the peasant class whose economic deprivation and spoilation is a consequence of the same capitalist system that has given rise to the urban system with all the social problems hinted at in the play. Going to the city, she becomes part of the struggling working masses who are the object of all forms of oppression. This is not, however, immediately clear to Cheja, to the elders or to the audience, who are led to believe that Cheja is part of Sembuli's family, rather than a servant of the well-to-do civil servant, subsisting on his condescending generosity; Sembuli in turn is at first regarded by the village elders as a son of the village, a brother who can extend a helping hand to the village. These economic and social questions that Muhando ignores are important in considering the social problems that exist in Tanzania. But for Muhando, whose main concern is to show them in moral terms, these facts are only insubstantially and indirectly used to aid in the knitting of a morally didactic drama, and thus they individualise rather than typify

Cheja's problem, twisting the conflict into that of the individual versus the society.

Not only is Cheja seen as the victim of the "faceless" city, but for her "looseness," she becomes an object for scorn from Bwana Chowe, her father, and from the other elders in the village. When Cheja runs away from Dar-es-Salaam and arrives back home, her father, without pausing to ask what has happened, jumps on her. He curses her and attributes her "misconduct" to an inherent flaw in women which he says she has inherited from her mother. Bwana Chowe's treatment of Cheja can be compared to that of Mama Salum by Mzee Issa in Heshima Yangu. The two elders are male chauvinists, feeling quite at home in the male-dominated traditional environment. Also, the deliberations by the council of Elders do not take into consideration Cheja's welfare or try to understand the social causes for her plight, but only cover the question of financial reparations for the damage done. As Mzee Chimaisi, one of the elders says, the traditional custom demands that:

> . . . payment should be made for three things
> . . . first, payment for the parents of the girl,
> second, payment to the wronged girl herself, and
> third, payment for the child's upbringing. (p. 18)

The deliberations by the elders do not involve Cheja in the making of the decision. The procedures for such a meeting and deliberations derive from a tradition that has been in existence since time immemorial. These procedures do not cater to the specific situation of the individual. The Council of Elders treats Cheja as a helpless patient who has little part, if any, in her salvation. It is because of the feeling that she is hopeless, unwanted and left out that Cheja attempts suicide. It is an act of self-pity and rebellion. It is also a melodramatic formula which the author employs to jolt the audience into "moral awareness." At the end of the play Cheja is employed by the playwright as a means of overt, direct moralising. Her choice to go and join an Ujamaa village to help in nation-building is an imposed solution in which Cheja is miraculously converted from a deviant to a heroine for Ujamaa. It is an attempt to prove that conflicts between individuals and society, such as the one dramatised in Hatia can peacefully be resolved by invoking the philosophy of Ujamaa.

Unlike Cheja, Sembuli has had more experience with the city and its ways, he is viewed by the elders in the village as a symbol of the mysterious city. Well to do, with a well-paying job and a car, he is a full member of the petty-bourgeois class in Tanzania. He also belongs to the same social system that has bred the Juma Bakaris. In the village he is venerated by the elders as a benefactor, a man of authority, one who can be relied on in times of need, a fact that Sembuli obligingly proves by taking Cheja under his guardianship (meaning employment) in the city. Bwana Chowe regards this gesture as that of a good man, a man of moral integrity; it creates in Bwana Chowe's and the villagers' minds an illusion that the class that Sembuli represents is virtuous, honorable and harmless, simply because at times individuals from this class choose to extend a "helping hand" of "brotherhood" to the peasantry.

The gesture by Sembuli has not, however, succeeded in absolutely masking a basic antagonism that exists between the Chowes (the peasants) and the Sembulis (the petty bourgeoisie) in Tanzania. One moment Bwana Chowe fiercely castigates Cheja for running away, seeing in Cheja's action a threat to the good friendship he has with Sembuli, but in the next moment he hurls his wrath at Sembuli who Cheja has falsely accused of making her pregnant. One might argue that Bwana Chowe's wrath is a natural reaction of a father at somebody who has violated his daughter. Later on, however, as most of the elders range themselves against Sembuli, one senses the hint of class antagonism that exists between Sembuli and the villagers. Mkami (who is not an elder but has been invited to attend the deliberations by virtue of being Cheja's brother) bitterly insists that Sembuli must pay a heavy fine, not just because tradition requires it but because "he is wealthy . . . he even has a car." (p. 18) This remark not only denotes the envy that Mkami feels, but also the desire for revenge, not empty revenge, but revenge that the "havenots" (Mkami) can turn to profit at the expense of the "haves." Class antagonism is turned to the service of Mkami's self-interest. Apart from this, occasional reference is made to Sembuli's social and economic status, and to the conflict in values existing between him and the elders. When Sembuli learns that the elders intend to keep him back for the ritual, thus delaying him from returning to Dar-es-Salaam and to his job, he protests the delay which to him is not only unnecessary but foolish:

> My elders, I cannot afford to wait till tomorrow, I will be late for my work . . . I must go back to Dar-es-Salaam to be back in time for my work. [emphasis mine] (p. 22)

This is probably genuine protestation from a conscientious bureaucrat, but the elders, thinking that the man is pooh-poohing tradition and belittling their grey hair, take offense. Bwana Chowe retorts:

> You are starting to talk nonsense now. (mimicking him) "I will be late for work" . . . Do you think we have no work to do? [emphasis mine] (p. 22).

Bwana Chowe's indignation is caused not so much by Sembuli's reluctance to obey tradition which is serious in itself, but specifically by Sembuli's "boastful" reference to his job. What Bwana Chowe really means by his retort, and quite appropriately too, is that the peasant also attaches value to his time contrary to the slanders made by pen-pushing bureaucrats who say that the peasant is an idle layabout simply because he does not possess an office to boast of. The confrontation between Sembuli and the elders attains climax during the ritual when he is faced by a gang of solemn prosecutors and an overzealous Mwapishaji.

Such conflicts between Sembuli and the peasants are played out by Muhando, not as the unconscious expression of real, but masked, class antagonism between the well-to-do, well-fed and "highly cultured" city based petty-bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the exploited, illiterate, impoverished peasantry on the other, but as simple, abstract cultural differences between "city values" and "country values." Thus, in Hatia, class antagonism, a problem that would have provided for a much more engaging drama has only been implied and left to trail at the rear of the playwright's moral concerns. The conflict between Sembuli and the village elders is dramatised as that of an innocent individual duelling against a tyrannical traditional clique. Technically, Sembuli is innocent of the offense he is being accused of, but ironically, when things are considered in their deeper terms, he is guilty of the offense as he belongs to the class that participates in holding sway over the social system which breeds the Juma Bakaris.

In the clash between Sembuli and the elders, it is Sembuli who emerges the victor when he shakes the infallibility of tradition by insolently throwing a spanner into the ritual proceedings. It is clear from the way the two sides are portrayed that the playwright is backing the side of Sembuli, a man he trusts to provide the solution to some of the problems at the end of the play. In contrast to Sembuli, the elders are shown to be shortsighted in their approach to social problems. In being told by a runaway Cheja that Sembuli raped her and is responsible for making her pregnant, Bwana Chowe flies into a fury and on a totally unreasonable impulse decides to go to Dar-es-Salaam, which he has never visited, to collect Sembuli's head. Characterised as a man crudely ruled by an abrasive male ego and a self-destructive impulse, he is an antithesis of Sembuli who is painted as a schooled gentleman filled with self-control and ruled by a rational temperament. Bwana Chowe's temperament, unlike Sembuli's, prevents him from seeing the problm as "objectively" as Sembuli does, a shortcoming that also dominates the deliberations of the Council of Elders, robbing it of credibility.

5 The Council of Elders is shown as being impotent in dealing with Cheja's problem. They hastily pass judgement over Sembuli after peering only as far as the end of their noses. Their final decision that Sembuli pay a fine as reparation for the wound inflicted, is as ineffective as their decision to shove Sembuli into a ritual test. One by one, Sembuli's adversaries are proven to be dishonest individuals, Mkami, Cheja's brother, is prepared to turn Cheja's plight to his own advantage. With hopes of converting part of the fine Sembuli is to pay into means for arranging his own marriage, he proceeds to press to have Sembuli pay seven cows, nine goats and three chickens, betraying a ludicrous greed that even the other elders snicker at. The Mwapishaji (oath administrator) is portrayed as a corrupt old goat who unashamedly commercialises on the cases brought before him.

As for Sembuli, he is presented in a positive light. Confidently innocent, he is brisk, quick to take proper action as demonstrated when he makes a lightning appearance in the village in search of Cheja. Fiercely self-righteous, he grows in the course of the play to assume an aura of authority, maintaining a semi-official capacity in his intervention in events. It is during the oath-taking ritual, however, that Sembuli attains his full stature, ready to fit into the moral role that the playwright has been holding for him. Through the element of a traditional ritual, the conflict between Sembuli and the elders is lent a heightened dramatic impact. The scene, potentially comical, tends to involve the audience in the suspense about Sembuli's fate: is Sembuli going to take the plunge into the boiling pot? The audience is not left in suspense for long. With a sigh of relief and admiration, it regards Sembuli as a hero when he unexpectedly throws the proceedings into pure havoc by pointing an outrageous finger at Cheja's brother, slapping on him responsibility for his sister's pregnancy. Here, the audience is expected to giggle at the easy way in which the self-assuredness of Sembuli's adversaries has been deflated.

Why does Muhando build up Sembuli in this fashion? For an answer one has to understand the role that Sembuli is designed for in the play. The end of the play clarifies this role. In the aftermath of the disorder that has swept the village following the fatal impasse that has struck the ritual proceedings, Sembuli emerges as the torch bearer of the new order. After the elders have put their heads together and scratched them in vain over what to do about this Juma Bakari of Dar-es-Salaam, Sembuli, arms folded, puts their confusion to rest. Lecturing to the attentive villagers, he moralises on the need to seek out the

Juma Bakaris of Tanzania and remould them by changing their consciousness. According to Sembuli this can be done through a moral education which will lead to their rehabilitation into "good" and "worthy" citizens:

> Leave this Juma to me . . . after all that has happened we cannot let this Juma continue in the same lifestyle, a lifestyle that will be cause for his own destruction and that of others . . . [emphasis mine]

He goes on further,

> After Cheja has told me more about this young man I will search for him high and low. And I will use every means to educate him about the incorrect lifestyle he is leading. He must understand that life is not simply money, or a good time. Good life means having good relations with one's fellow human beings. [emphasis mine] (p. 40)

Sembuli presents to the audience the idealistic reformist views of the playwright. The playwright seems to believe that social change can be achieved through addressing oneself to individual deviants, much like the priest administers one by one to the souls of the "lost lambs." She further seems to believe that by means of a humanistic education and by discouraging acquisitiveness in individuals, just relations can be instituted between all the members of a community. These beliefs are based on the idealism of Ujamaa.

At first Muhando presents Sembuli as a mere individual, an ordinary do-gooder, fallen victim to a dishonest world, but gradually she wraps layers of authority around him and promotes him into a position of leadership in providing solutions to social problems. If we assess Sembuli's claims to leadership in the end, we will find that these claims are but a posture contrived by Penina Muhando to give credit for social change to Sembuli's class which hides its true nature behind a torrent of moralising.

Tambueni Haki Zetu

In a major way, Tambueni Haki Zetu marks a further step by Muhando towards a home-brewed drama which draws its lifeblood from local culture and its theatrical elements. The play is a fruit of experimentation, but unlike Hatia in which the playwright experiments only on the level of form but bases the play's content on a modern urban-derived social problem, in Tambueni Haki Zetu, Muhando experiments not only with form, but also with content from a traditional heritage. An advance over Hatia, Tambueni Haki Zetu is a dramatisation of an actual event from the deep historical past of Muhando's ethnic group, the Wakaguru, and can thus be considered as a purely "indigenous" drama. The events in the play actually happened between the Wakaguru and the Wamasai (who are cattle herders like the Wakusa). In order to counter the raids by the Wamasai, the Wakaguru formed a movement similar to Zetu. The movement operated in tight secrecy and even today, according to Muhando (in informal talks I had with her), the activities of the movement are shrouded in mystery.

However, contrary to views and comments expressed orally that I have heard from some of the people who have read the play, and in spite of her well-known interest in traditional cultures and arts, Muhando cannot because of Tambueni Haki Zetu be merely considered as a romantic traditionalist. The events she dramatises centred on the themes of persecution, armed conflict and self-defense, are related to and throw light on issues of contemporary social and political concerns in Africa, issues such as liberation struggles, imperialism and aggression by a neighbouring country. In fact, Muhando's selection of a subject taken from a local historical heritage, rather than constituting meaningless, self-indulgent traditionalism, ensures a concrete step towards not only a home-grown theatre movement, but also a relevant and significant one. Unfortunately, not many efforts have been devoted to an appreciation of Tanzania's historical heritage with its potential of being an inexhaustible source of great stories, themes, characters of epic proportions, entertaining and educating dramatic situations, elements which can be applied in a relevant manner to today's contemporary issues. Likewise, traditional mythology can be manipulated for dramatic purposes towards making a progressive statement. In the process of using her traditional heritage meaningfully, Muhando has employed in scenes one and two certain vital elements from the Wakaguru traditional mythology and religion. Besides using the idea of the existence of a spirit world in order to form a broad enough scope to stage the all-important ideological conflict between Mundewa and the spirits, she also helps in popularising local mythology, and interpreting it through the modern stage in such a way that it attains meaning for modern theatre audiences in Tanzania. At this point mention must also be made of other traditional forms that Muhando has used in the plays: the oathtaking ceremony, song, and actions that can lend themselves to mimetic and dance-like rhythms such as the preparations for battle by the Watone, and the pursuit and stalking of the Wakusa.

While Muhando should be rightfully acknowledged for attempting to advance aesthetically on what she started in Hatia, she should also be criticised for some shortcomings that the play suffers, shortcomings that result more from Muhando's boldness to experiment in order to develop her drama to new formal and social heights, rather than from a lack of craftsmanship. The fearlessness with which she launches into experimentation has not been followed up by enough sensitivity and imagination to explore the material picked for such experimentation. As it is, the dramatic material in Tambueni Haki Zetu is still crude in form. We can cite as examples the first and last scene which are the best in the play, but which have not been conceived with sufficient incisiveness and sophistication. They are solemn and heavy-handed, as if the playwright has at the last moment become too timid to manipulate the elements carried in them.

Her experimentation with the rest of the content does not fare any better. She remains too much within the narrow realm of the events, dramatising them only superficially without penetrating their internal essence and manipulating them theatrically. On top of that, most of the events and the background to them are brought to us through a dramatic medium lacking in dexterity, and mainly in the form of a story. Little of what happens is dramatised, and most is narrated. For example, the history about the migration of the Wakusa to the land of the Watone, and the subsequent treaty that gives the Waboma rights as custodians of the relationship between the Watone and the Wakusa is all brought out through verbose narrations. Likewise, the raids by the Wakusa are revealed to the audience through reports, and not once does the audience witness for itself any of the confrontations. The characters do not bear deep, distinct theatrical personalities such as those one finds in Kinjeketile (see note 68), another play based on historical events. Rather the characters, as in Heshima Yangu, seem to exist merely as means for presenting the story, and not as substantial artistic components or as analysable categories. The dramatic action is limited in scope, hardly going beyond the basic questions: the aggression by the Wakusa, the efforts of the Watone to defend themselves, the moral justification for the struggle, and the reactionary denial by the spirits of the "human" rights of the Watone's basic right of self-defense. There is a constant repetition in dramatising these questions without much attempt to examine the contents of the aggression, of the self-defense mounted by the Watone, or more importantly, of the ideology of the spirits. What new philosophies and ideological truths can one learn from the portrayal of these questions? The audience is cut off from the underlying causes, the significance and the subtle motives for the events and of the people behind them. Some of the major events are not shown but only reported. A notable example being the detention of Mundewa with its strategic significance to the existence of _Zetu_ and the negotiations carried out with the Waboma to have him released, events which are merely reported. A fuller, sensitive dramatisation of the movement of events in their subtlety and intensity, and a more theatrical portrayal of the human action and scheming behind the events would have created a fuller drama. Instead the playwright seems to have contented herself with only an external and sweeping representation of the story.

Perhaps the major cause for the flaws identified above is that the playwright has cut several corners in the construction of dramatic form in her eagerness to moralise about the righteousness and the necessity of the struggle of the Watone. In the process she seems to have paid little attention to the shaping out of a fully evolved dramatic situation and theatrical characters. In _Tambueni Haki Zetu_, although Muhando does not moralise as directly as she does in _Hatia_, one can still spot the playwright's puppet strings on the characters as she loudly champions the cause of the Watone.

We shall examine the moral content in Tambueni Haki Zetu by focusing on Mundewa as a representative of the cause of the Watone. The first and the last scene in which Mundewa features as the hero of the play, serves no other function than to moralise for recognition of the correctness of armed struggles for justice. In his confrontation with the Spirits, Mundewa personifies the "human" spirit, resistant to injustice and incapable of remaining passive in the face of provocation; and he also serves as the moral voice of the author that pays tribute to this resistant streak in the "human" spirit.

Mundewa's strength which is a product of the resistant streak is, however, combined with human "feebleness" and a sense of helplessness which are also demonstrated during the confrontation. In the first scene when he first appears before the Spirits who are portrayed as all-powerful and formidable, he embodies the "frailty" and the timidness of the uninitiated human being: "(. . . He is seized with fear, he does not know what to do. He is transfixed as one in a trance.)" (p. 1). Here, Mundewa's state contrasts sharply with that at the end of the play, which reflects the streak of rebelliousness, where "Forcefully, he approaches the gate where Sekulu is seated and thrusts himself past him. Sekulu makes no effort to bar him." (p. 34) The two approaches that Muhando uses to characterise Mundewa are both aimed at endearing him to the audience as a true people's hero. In portraying Mundewa at first as a helpless human being, he leads the audience to identify and sympathise with him as an underdog, as a fellow human being in the clutches of superior forces. The audience is led to identify with him on the basis of shared human frailty. However, the audience is also made to identify with him on the basis of human strength potential, admiring his obstinate courage in rebelling against the reactionary traditional ideology nurtured by the Spirits. One would expect, however, that the audience would also be invited to feel the utmost outrage at the Spirits' pacifist ideology as a natural part of taking up and championing Mundewa's position. This, the playwright does not encourage.

At the end of the play the Spirits are left on their feet. They are still recognised as a continuing power over human affairs. Mundewa has only succeeded in denting Sekulu's composure without challenging his role as a gatekeeper to the doors of "posterity." Yet the Spirits show no trace of "nobility," and no shred of a materialist common sense that can earn them the status they enjoy at the end of the play. In their blatant and totally blind denial of reality, the Spirits emerge as nothing but an ideologically bankrupt clique of fascists, as reactionary fanatics. At this stage one might ask, why does Mundewa, who has hitherto displayed certain progressive instincts, insist on entering Kuzimu, a birthplace of reaction and the death place of all sense? The reason lies once again in the reformist attitude of Muhando, which has been transferred to Mundewa. Even though Mundewa feels the utmost outrage at the blindness of the Spirits, and impatiently rejects their ideology which robs the Watone of their right to justice, because he is not independent of the Spirits' paternalism and finds their existence still legitimate, he only contents himself with making a solitary gesture, a manifesto for individual heroism, without confronting the whole edifice upon which the Spirits' ideology is founded. The implication by the author is clear: the Spirits should still be conceded the glory of being the venerable judges over human destiny, nevertheless met with occasional, slight critical challenge to correct them. Mundewa's gesture is a limited act of rebellion although it is presented in the play as the climactic, ultimately revolutionary act. The lesson projected to the audience through Mundewa's gesture only amounts to a defensive, unnecessary moral justification for something that is universally assumed to be an instinctive factor in human society. What useful lessons can the audience learn about the struggle against reactionary ideologies from Mundewa's token and partial gesture?

Muhando's moral concerns are further revealed when she idealises the role the Watone play in seeking social and "spiritual" justice. In portraying their struggles she spares no breath in parading and glorifying the military, strategic, organisational and moral strength that is on their side. Taking their side totally, she promotes them as good models for any struggling people, and their leaders as prototypes of a popular leadership. In the meantime she ignores to represent the Waboma and the Wakusa in the dramatic action but only gives reports of their activities. Concentrating exclusively on presenting the events from the point of view of the Watone, she repeatedly harps on about their persecution and their heroic struggles, and by overdramatising these questions moralises on the values of patriotism, nationalism, militancy, good leadership, and commitment to a cause, values which she considers to be popular in modern Tanzania.

As a warning against elements that can be generally antagonistic to a struggle, Muhando has injected into the play the character, Nono. An example of a selfish individualist because of his arrogant non-involvement in the popular struggle, Nono is regarded by the Watone as an unmistakable enemy of the people. The playwright does not, however, develop Nono into an active antagonist, into a dynamic character, the better to illustrate the difficulties facing Zetu. Instead she merely uses him as a simple, sketchy teaching aid by which to draw a moral lesson about the need for mass involvement in a struggle and to teach about the negative effects of individualism, itself a large theme. Such a lesson is woven and brought home to the audience when, by refusing to join Zetu, Nono is ostracized by his fellow Watone. As a result, when he is robbed of his cattle and is in most dire need of help, he is left with none. And it is only after suffering some anguish, remorse and shame, and after repenting, that his fellow Watone consider he has earned through pain and humiliation of repenting the right to join Zetu and benefit by it. The moral in this case is unmistakable: do not give your back to your brothers.

Pambo

In this play there is a far greater theatrical consciousness than one finds in Muhando's previous plays, a consciousness that might have been inspired by Muhando's growing need to manipulate the dramatic medium as far as possible and bend it to didactic ends without the fetters of naturalistic theatrical norms. Both the action and the characters are extremely theatricalised and loaded with symbolic meaning. Judging from the way Pambo has been constructed it seems that Muhando is more committed than ever to the idea of a didactic theatre with its form determined by the necessity to confront, with the utmost immediacy and directness possible, the audience with the moral message. This speculation is confirmed in Talaka Si Mke Wangu, the next play we shall look at.

Much like Tambueni Haki Zetu, Pambo is a bold experimentation with various artistic devices. Songs, the use of which is much limited in Tambueni Haki Zetu and in Hatia, are used extensively to expose the cancerous host of vices that have poisoned Pambo's petty-bourgeois mind, and to intensify the moral conflict between Pambo and the two children, and the rest of the community. The forest, the source of the chaotic energy that breeds moral disorder, is used also much like in Hatia and Tambueni Haki Zetu, to broaden the setting into timelessness and at the same time to conjure up an unconfined, non-urban, traditional cultural atmosphere with a potential for staging broad, non-naturalistic action. Dance and mime are used to help externalise in expressionistic terms states of mind, especially the "spiritual" condition of Pambo, and the state of hypnosis under which Pambo has managed to abduct Pesa and Raha. Simple dramatic skits are improvised for demonstration of details as a form of dramatic diagrams to illustrate specific features of Pambo's general condition. Familiar, stark symbols are put to theatrical use as indicators to the themes being dramatised; the graduation cap and gown, adorning the wall, for example, help to symbolise Pambo's sterile elitism and his dusty pseudo-intellectualism.

In spite of the inventiveness that one finds in Pambo, one still faces the fact that Muhando has yet to achieve the craftsmanship required of an experimentalist in order to conduct her theatrical experiment with sophistication. She has employed the ingenuity of a builder who, having marked and cut down some of the best trees in the forest, has wasted the trees by failing to construct a building worthy of them. Thus, she has ingeniously imbued the drama in Pambo with interesting theatrical elements but has failed to make dynamic use of them. We can see this clearly by looking at the dominant element used extensively in the play, the self-exposing, self-glorifying song by Pambo, "Pambo, big shot Pambo," which runs throughout the play. Repetitive and too lengthy, the song ends up becoming a substitute element for real dramatic action rather than a supplement to it, and is thus overused as a theatrical element. Likewise, the chase in the forest, represented by repeated crossing of the stage, symbolising the progressing moral conflict between Pambo's "incorrect" values and the community's "correct" values, soon turns into a monotonous spectacle.

Most of the drama is conducted through Pambo who has been heavily theatricalised into a human symbol that Muhando employs didactically. Various devices are used to construct him theatrically; his eloquent madness, the song dance, the cap and gown, and Pesa and Raha (more of moral symbols than characters) surround him, extensions of his character. Pambo functions as a putrid source of corruption (symbolised by the incense that he burns to hypnotise Pesa and Raha in order to put them under his evil moral influence), and as an incarnation of the mind-poisoning evils of the petty-bourgeois class, the University graduates in particular. But through such portrayal of Pambo as a social type, Muhando only manages to expose the surface coloring of the petty-bourgeoisie without bringing out the material foundations on which this class is based. She parades and only describes quantitatively the values of this parasitical class which administers a neo-colonial state (arrogance, elitism, greed and moral decadence) in isolation from their material roots. She ends up by presenting abstract "moral" and "spiritual" conditions, an abstract struggle between "evil" (Pambo) and "good" (the community), and an abstract struggle between forces of degeneration and corruption and the forces of "regeneration" and "health." These struggles are staged mainly in the forest, a domain of unresolved moral questions, and are dramatised on an abstractly symbolic and moral level as can be discerned from the names of the characters. Pambo's materialist girlfriend is called Maua (Flowers), a symbol of the colorful superficiality of the petty-bourgeoisie. The two hypnotised boys go by the names of Pesa (Money) and Raha (Pleasure), and they symbolise some of the objects that Pambo courts in his fantasies, objects which he secures with his sinister hypnotic powers. On the other hand, Wema (Goodness), his other girlfriend who accuses Maua of bewitching (read: corrupting) Pambo and who, prompted by moral indignation has a fight with her, symbolises the ideal curative womanhood for Pambo's ills. Pambo's own name, meaning "ornament," symbolises the petty bourgeoisie itself; it serves the bourgeoisie and can be cast off or changed. It is not the ultimate power. (Muhando does not appear to grasp this, however, and to her his name merely symbolises superficiality.)

In no other play does Penina Muhando engage in more direct moralising than in Pambo where issues are expressed pointedly and with a compelling immediacy through numerous bold, didactic symbols. In spite of the limited manner in which they have been used, the symbols cannot be said to be shrouded in mystery, but are based on familiar life situations. Similarly, the characters who function as rough moral symbols are recognisable types whose identities are clearly and consistently defined, leaving no doubt as to what they stand for. An example of this is the portrayal of Pambo whose picture -- of who he is and what he stands for -- we are vividly given through the use of song, his maniacal monologues and through comments by other characters. The other characters are also types familiar to the audience, and because of this familiarity, Muhando capitalises on them to provide the audience with moral lessons. Wema provides a lesson on the kind of qualities a "good" woman should have, while Maua provides nothing but a negative example. Showing the ideal paternal concern the community should feel for the Pambos, the Mganga (traditional healer) and the fathers of the three runaways give a lesson on the way the community should care for and cure "misguided" individuals. The Hunter, on the other hand, standing for an "extreme" solution, represents to the audience Muhando's fear of a radical approach in curing the Pambos. Muhando no doubt considers the Hunter's suggestion to kill Pambo as an anarchistic and inhuman solution.

From the above analysis, one must have gathered that one of the chief means by which Muhando reaches out to make an impression on the audience is through sharp contrasts.[97] We have already mentioned the conflict between the forces of corruption that Pambo represents, and those of regeneration that the Mganga and the Fathers represent on behalf of the "good-intentioned" community. Within this basic conflict, other contrasting qualities and images can be noted, qualities that describe the essential conflict of "good" and "evil" that Muhando seems to be preoccupied with in Pambo. She opposes: the "insanity" of Pambo with the sanity and sobriety of the community; the irresponsibility of the runaways with the compassionate, determined sense of responsibility and mission of their pursuers; the vicious selfishness of the runaways with the magnanimity of the community; the chaotic wilderness to which the runaways are attracted with the curative domesticity of the village. Such a method of moralising through contrasts can also be traced in Hatia; the turbulence fomented by Sembuli's interruption of the ritual proceedings in the forest is contrasted with the atmosphere of "peace," "harmony" and "understanding" at the end of the play when Cheja's problem is supposedly resolved.

In her other plays where she deals with the traditional environment, Muhando appears to treat traditional values somewhat critically. In Pambo she embraces the traditional values as creative, regenerative, humanist and healing, able to convert Pambo from a member of the oppressor class into a socialist type. She makes use of spiritual possession and exorcism ritual to present the problem of Pambo in a moral context of patient/doctor, priest/sinner relationship. Relying on a traditional concept (of exorcism) to theatrically represent the ability of the community to administer a "spiritual and moral" cure, as a solution to social-class questions, she fosters the illusion that problems of modern-day Tanzania can be solved by resorting to certain positive values of tradition, to the traditional "wisdom" inherent in society, or that the traditional moral worldview based on pre-capitalist society can intervene successfully to resolve class contradictions of a type engendered by capitalism in its neo-colonial forms.

The type of solution advocated to cure the Pambos in Tanzania is, of course, a result of idealist thinking which fails to recognise that individuals from the petty-bourgeois class can be won over to the side of the masses and aroused to revolutionary action only through their involvement in the struggles of the masses. This is the only way that the Pambos in Tanzania can be cured.

Talaka Si Mke Wangu

This play is marked by its simplicity, the simplicity of a diagram or a selective sketch that dispenses with extraneous details and focuses on conveying the facts and teaching examples. In the play, Muhando assumes the pose of "scientific" explorer into the situation concerning Kona, hoping that by "objectively" presenting the facts about Kona's childhood, his past and the reasons for his turning to crime, the audience will undergo a moral enlightenment and will have a more humane regard for individuals like Kona. The simple setting (consisting of a single cell in one corner of the stage, with the rest, a bare stage) allows the playwright to roam with ease from the present to the past in pursuit of the hard facts she needs for the "case." The main weakness stemming from this, though, is that in striving for didactic simplicity, Muhando has denied the play dramatic depth and life. The "scientific" examination of the facts leading to Kona's problem has been mechanistically and exclusively tailored to her Freudian view that criminals in society occur as a result of an individual's subjection to psychological pressures during childhood.

The play focuses on Kona, the prisoner, an outcast from decent society, with the rest of the characters merely representing the various social pressures and factors that act on him to derail him from the path of "normal" behaviour. He is an unfortunate product of a mother obsessed with material things, of a philandering father and, later on, a victim of a sadistic stepmother and an insensitive dogmatically mechanistic educational system. Kona (who is the object of the "case" but is never shown in the flashbacks) is never engaged for any length of time with these elements but only makes a cursory encounter with them, only sufficiently to establish the bare facts. Among the elements that confront Kona in his childhood, Muhando emphasizes the cruelty of the stepmother who she shows to be completely villainous; this Muhando does in order to excite the audience's sympathy for Kona's suffering at the hands of an easily identifiable villain.

In presenting Kona's "case," Muhando makes use of the victim himself who, from the confinement of his cell which recalls to the audience's mind an animal cage, hurls recriminations against society, screaming out to an "ignorant" world the reasons for his plight. The reasons he has to give are then expressed and dramatised through flashback. At times the victim comments on the happenings in the flashback. For example, when Mama Kona consoles herself (after worriedly wondering who will care for Kona in her absence) that there is always someone who is ready to take care of a motherless child, Kona in his cell cannot control a bitter and angry outburst: "Who will take care of me? Who? Who? Who? Who?".

Thus Muhando sets up an irremedial confrontation between the victim and the audience (the society, that has victimized Kona), with the accusation in the form of a question from the victim's mouth. The victim's lonely anguish is pitted directly against the "ignorant" conscience and the conservative mentality (traditional inflexibility) of society. Kona's testimony reflects a world that is vicious and corrupt, that is responsible for creating hard core criminals like Kona. But what are the forces that represent this viciousness and corruption? Absolving the real culprits, Sembuli's class which collaborates in the creation of the deformities in the Juma Bakaris, the Konas and the Pambos, Muhando settles on scapegoats, Kona's parents and his stepmother, ordinary people, to represent this viciousness which stems not from the psychological pressures transpiring from the imperfect relations between ordinary people but from a social class system.

For solutions, once again the playwright calls for the "benevolent" and "altruistic" intervention by the community, especially by the leadership, as a way to exercise a cure. Over Radio Tanzania, immediately after the report of Kona's capture, we are informed of a seminar that is to be held soon to discuss the problems of delinquents and their rehabilitation. At the home of Baba Kona a crowd gathers to discuss Kona's plight and the social problem underlined by it. In the discussion, a comment or two is raised on whether more humane methods cannot be found to deal with criminals, and on whether prisons constitute an effective means to combat crime and straighten out deviants. Both these are attempts by Muhando to inspire a reformist outlook towards social problems which only proletarian revolution can solve.

Thus, by presenting case situations of victimized individuals, Muhando aims at stirring and opening up individual, as well as communal, conscience to social problems. In Talaka Si Mke Wangu through Kona, and also in Pambo, Hatia and Heshima Yangu, and in a different way in Tambueni Haki Zetu through the principal characters in these plays, the author seems to be campaigning for a liberal, moral outlook on social problems thus aiding the reformist trend in Tanzania sparked off by Ujamaa. The limitations this imposes on the form and content of her theatre have already been discussed but will be summed up with a view on how to overcome them in the next, concluding chapter which will, among other points, speculate on the future of Penina Muhando's theatre.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

So far we have examined the efforts undertaken to establish a new foundation and direction as well as a new function for the emerging modern African theatre. And in this context we have scrutinized Muhando and her works which constitute one of the lights brightening up the new theatrical scene in Africa, a light that is sometimes invisible due to a surrounding fog of obscurity which this study has attempted to lift. We have seen that African drama and theatre is found not only in the names of established African dramatists but also in the little-known achievements of Penina Muhando. We have seen that her drama is a product of the general reaction of the African peoples against foreign cultural imperialism, a reaction that has inspired in Africa an outpouring of theatrical creativity and innovation. But, more specifically, we have seen her drama to be a product of a moral and social worldview engendered by Ujamaa, one of several ~~reformist~~ attempts in Africa to encourage, among many other things, cultural self-reliance. This chapter presents a general critical summary of all that has been covered. In it Penina Muhando is seen as a dramatist on a campaign of social and cultural reform for theatre, as one of the many supporters of a genuine African theatre.

The major theme that runs through almost all criticism on African theatre (including in Muhando's own theoretical writings) is the contradiction between the alien viewpoint of the colonial inspired theatre, and the need for a theatre grown in indigenous soil -- a theatre that expresses the experiences and the aspirations of the African peoples. We have concentrated on criticism that generally champions the establishment of indigenous theatre on the basis of the rejection of the colonial theatre. We have however seen that even such criticism has, with its claims of being constructive, at times tended to throw African theatre from the colonial pan into the neo-colonial fire, distorting its purpose, subjecting it to romantic exploitation, and ascribing to it a mystical and spiritual role. An example of this is the criticism by Wole Soyinka and Joe de Graft. Such criticism proves that despite the good intentions all round to create progressive theatre, African theatre is still in a confused state of evolution.

But even the criticism that presents African theatre from a more positive ideological perspective than has Soyinka's and de Graft's, is inclined to preoccupy itself with theoretical discussions exclusively on the sociological foundations of African theatre. It does not stretch itself sufficiently to examine practical aesthetic and technical aspects of theatrical production. As a result theatre criticism, which should be providing guidance to the theatre practitioner, has been outstripped by theatrical production. Awareness and knowledge of critics and dramatists of theatrical activity in the various corners of Africa have been general and theoretical, even among individuals with progressive interest in what is happening. Consequently dramatists have not been able to enjoy creative stimulation from critical reports of others' technical and artistic achievements.

Such has been the case with Penina Muhando who has striven to link herself with other trends and theatrical experiences in Africa and in the "Third World." She has expressed only in broad and general terms her awareness of the work by other creative individuals in Africa who are

> . . . engaged in all sorts of experiments on traditional forms in search of theatre forms that can be relevant in content, and form and accessible to the masses. Travelling theatres, theatre workshops and experimental theatres are in action in different parts of the continent. Performances are being done in the open, in the streets. The proscenium, curtains, scenery are being done away with, improvisation is taking place of the written and the well-made play and expressions through dance, mime and song are reducing the dependence on dialogue.[98]

Although from this general overview, she goes on in her article to outline some specific examples of where and how these developments are taking place, she fails to reflect on the technical implications and lessons these experiences might have in regard to reshaping and remoulding the aesthetics of theatre in Tanzania. And judging from some of the shortcomings in her plays, it is clear that Muhando has not fully pondered on the technical possibilities transpiring from the theatrical developments she describes in her article. She is only generally aware of the progress that has been made in African theatre.

However, full critical acknowledgement of the progress made is only possible through a study of not only the theoretical but also the practical and technical questions of African theatre, i.e. through criticism based on specific knowledge of theatrical production. Similarly, if African theatre is to advance, it must not be based on rhetorical and uncreative armchair criticism of the influences of European traditions. For a criticism of the colonial imported theatre to benefit anyone it must be done within the process of practical experimental work that aims at assimilating workable elements from the European tradition and adapting them to indigenous conditions as supplementary resources in the creation of effective theatre. And also opting for traditional sources as a means of rejecting domination by European traditions should not lead to a blind and unproductive traditionalism. Rather, it should be a means to more enlightenment on the real essence and the possibilities of the theatre.

To demonstrate her discontent with colonial theatre in practical terms, Muhando has written plays searching for new forms and structures from indigenous traditions. Her interest in traditional culture, however, does not mean she is seeking a means of escape from the present. Her artistic endeavours are focussed on current social problems and not on reinstituting values of the traditional society. She believes in the contemporary character of theatre:

> Theatre is a living art and can only be functional if it serves contemporary society. The world is changing and the "hunting" ritual that was meaningful to our hunting ancestors cannot be functional to a population of factory workers.[99]

However, despite her awareness of the potential existing in Tanzania for a successful indigenous theatre, and despite her strong conviction that theatre must play a social function in Tanzania and Africa, her drama has not kept in step with her definition of a truly Tanzanian theatre and her views on the role of theatre. She has not yet demonstrated her goals in full practical terms.

The major reason for this is because, where she is, she is not surrounded by sufficient practical theatre activity to allow a full application of her views. Despite her efforts to break out of the confines of the University, she is still very much a university individual operating within the strictures of an academic environment, under the constraints of an artistically insensitive bureaucracy. On the whole, attempts by the

Department of Theatre (at the University of Dar-es-Salaam) to go beyond the University have been of a token nature. The few productions that manage to be taken on tour belong to a University-type theatre that is tailored more to the narrow cultural and intellectual elite conditions of the University than to the general public. When her plays are produced at all they are only performed once or twice (and only inconsequentially), hardly enough time for a play to have impact on an audience. With the exception of Hatia, which was performed sixteen times across the nation, her other plays have not enjoyed much exposure to the public, and seem to have been written only for publication. This is because, although there has been a consistently mounting interest in producing local rather than foreign works, the process of writing for the theatre is still considered an armchair occupation largely detached from the main production work, an autonomous occupation. There is still lack of direct and immediate appreciation of a local play as constituting theatre rather than literature. The Department has not been fully sensitive to the development of local playwrights like Muhando by improving their works and their art through critical theatre productions.

Therefore, although her plays show all the marks of being indigenous in their content and in their formal qualities, we can only assess their popular appeal through speculation as there is no solid criterion yet by which to judge in full their effect and impact on local audiences, and thus their real worth. All that can be said about them now is that they are indigenous in spirit. Their potential can only be realised through a wedding between them and the masses. The same thing can be said about numerous other African plays which have been praised on the basis of a literary, theoretical evaluation of their content and form, but which have not had a chance to prove their worth on stage.

In our examination of Muhando's drama in relation to the philosophy of Ujamaa, we have seen how the philosophy has specifically influenced the content of the plays and the technique of the playwright. Although compared to other Tanzanian dramatists such as Ngalimecha Ngahyoma, the author of Kijiji Chetu, Muhando is only indirectly responsive to Ujamaa, the moral outlook in the philosophy seems to have imposed fetters on her development as a social dramatist. Instead of using Ujamaa to expand her social vision and as a political framework to inspire new dimensions in her work, she has allowed herself to be trapped in it by failing to make a critical interpretation of it. Within this entrapment she has not been able to function creatively enough. She has been unable to design sufficiently critical dramatic action, and characters who can go beyond narrow didactic aims to become complex theatrical metaphors. She has allowed the moralistic content of Ujamaa and her own liberal humanism to impose controls on the formal maturing of her plays, preventing them from sufficiently confronting social reality. Further contact between her plays and Tanzanian masses would probably have provided for her drama a stronger basis in materialist perspective, elevating it above the moral individualism that at present motivates them. Ujamaa, despite its idealism, has undoubtedly provided certain conditions for progressive theatre which Muhando can make use of to advance her drama.

A dramatist creating for the people must keep in touch with the popular theatrical traditions in Tanzania. As we have already seen, there is a wealth of theatrical activity that goes on in Tanzania besides the written drama: vichekesho with their raw comic energy, the short improvised skits, mime and dance drama by semi-professional groups, ngonjera with their direct didacticism, and praise and satire songs. These constitute theatre in schools, in the town and village community halls, in factories and in Party youth circles. Besides expressing the content of Ujamaa, these activities also express the rich everyday life and problems of the masses. However, many of those activities, especially those that take place outside the schools, are poorly recorded, left out in the jungle of neglect as Ebrahim Hussein has pointed out (see note 74). Although more effort is being made to get in touch with, and record these activities, University-based theatre critics and artists have hardly gone beyond making theoretical note of them. They have not examined their potential as rich theatrical sources. A successful and popular indigenous theatre in Tanzania, and in Africa, can only thrive by feeding on the variety of local theatrical traditions. As Soyinka puts it,

> Drama . . . exists on the boards, in improvised space among stalls in the deserted or teeming market, or the raised platform in a school or community hall, in the secretive recesses of a nature fringed shrine [and not only in the] printed text.[100]

Thus should theatre in Tanzania be sought after in the street and market places, in street vending, churches, in children's play areas and in social and political gatherings. It is on the basis of such informal sources that theatre can express, in social and political terms, the life and struggles of the masses.

It is now time to project certain speculations on the future and prospects of the drama of Penina Muhando and its implications for the growth of theatre in Tanzania. But first, how successful has the theatre of Muhando been? At present this question cannot be answered fully: the full success story can only be told when her plays have been seen widely by Tanzanian audiences. However, the potential for success can be seen in what she has done so far. One can see it, for instance, in the popularity, the social relevance and the social commitment of Hatia which enjoyed an enthusiastic production and tour, and was a subject of lively nation-wide debate.[101] It is in Harakati za Ukombozi (Liberation Struggles),[102] the latest play she has devised and directed, however, that one can see more clearly Muhando's potential for becoming a successful and significant dramatist. The play, which may soon be published, might be a good indication of a new direction she has decided upon: a direction towards a popular indigenous drama in which non-literary means are employed to construct it.

Unlike her previous plays, Harakati za Ukombozi grew out of extensive improvisation experiments with a number of theatrical forms such as song, mime, ritual and dance, elements found in popular traditional performances which represent a non-European local culture. The play is strongly political, dramatising the history behind the founding of Chama Cha Mapinduzi Cha Tanzania (Revolutionary Party of Tanzania)[103] discussing its achievements and shortcomings. A description of its impact and significance is given in an analysis of the play:

> Because of the direct way in which it confronted various crucial political and social questions related to Ujamaa, . . . the play was extremely popular. Government officials reportedly sat in on rehearsals, censoring parts of it from the beginning. Among other things the play showed secret ruling class meetings in which plans were made to sabotage the Arusha Declaration and the radical Mwongozo (Party Guidelines) documents, thus unmasking the rulers as demagogues. More politically involved than Muhando's other plays, it might be an indication of a new direction for Muhando towards a more direct expression of political reality,

> a movement that would lead away from her previous preoccupation with mild and harmless social themes[104]

The quote reveals Muhando's attempt to transcend her uncritical loyalty to Ujamaa and to attain new levels of critical thought. Artistically the play is significant because of the way it has been constructed. Instead of starting out from the written text, Muhando has started dramatic construction from the stage through improvisation. Her subject matter has no doubt much to do with her choice of such an approach. In order to represent the historical and political scope around the subject matter, Harakati za Ukombozi had to be treated through devices that are capable of expressing the broad sweep of events and action, and which can allow the presentation of precise social commentary which is part of the play. It is safe to speculate that Muhando's involvement with ventures such as Harakati za Ukombozi will help to broaden out her vision in regard to social and political questions, from that of a moral individualist to that of a truly social dramatist working towards a genuine modern African theatre that can tackle major contemporary concerns relevant to the African masses.

NOTES

[1] In 1967, the then National ruling Party for Mainland Tanzania, TANU (Tanganyika National African Union), proclaimed a political move towards "socialism" in what came to be known as the Arusha Declaration. Its programme included moves to undercut the emerging indigenous elite and the petty bourgeoisie, ie. to minimize links with international capitalism, and to establish cooperative socialist enterprises. The move also reinforced certain trends of the pre-independence nationalist era by strongly advocating the creation of a national culture, and a rejection of the colonial legacy.

[2] Demas Nwoko, "The Search for a New African Theatre," Présence Africaine, 75 (1970), p. 59.

[3] Penina Muhando, "Modern African Theatre with Special Emphasis on East Africa," UMMA, 5, i (1975), 1 - 11. The article reveals not only her interests but her limitations. Much dramatic activity in Francophone, Lusophone and Arabic countries is inaccessible to her because she cannot read these languages; periodicals are scarce in Tanzania, and travel funds are difficult to secure, preventing her from travelling around Africa to see and hear about various theatrical experiences. Her article represents a summary of those things available to a scholar through local resources. What makes this article significant is the fact that the author looks at modern African theatre in the context of cultural decolonisation and regards its role to be social and political. However, although she offers some very good observations of theatrical developments in the continent, these are not accompanied by sufficiently critical evaluation or elaboration. In spite of the limitations cited, the article retains its importance as a good source of information on modern African theatre.

[4] This refers particularly to Penina Muhando's "Music in Tanzanian Traditional Theatre: The Kaguru as a Case Study" (M.A. Thesis, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1973). Here, in great detail and with much diligence, Muhando describes a number of ceremonies, festivals, and functions, looking at the theatrical and artistic performances, focusing on the function of music in them. She also notes the fundamental contrasts between traditional theatre and the imported European theatre.

[5] James N. Amankulor, "The Traditional Black African Theatre: Problems of Critical Evaluation," Ufahamu, 6, ii (1976), p. 42. For further description and analysis of traditional drama see Simon Ottenberg's "The Analysis of an African Play," Research Review (Institute of African Studies, Legon, Ghana), 7, iii (1971), pp. 66 - 83, and K.N. Bame's "Drama and Theatre in Traditional African Society," Conch, 6, i/ii (1974), pp. 80 - 98.

[6] Wole Soyinka, Myth, Literature and the African World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 39.

[7] Ibid., p. 40.

[8] Joe C. de Graft, "Roots in African Drama and Theatre," African Literature Today, 8 (1976), p. 21.

[9] Scott Kennedy, In Search of African Theatre (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), p. 50.

[10] Renga Moi (unpublished) was clearly intended to be a means of showing off African traditional way of life and culture to a tourist audience. The play contained themes and traditional theatrical elements which helped to "sell" Africa abroad. According to Victoria Nes Kirby, who describes the play as it was performed in the World Festival of Theatre in Nancy, France in 1973, Renga Moi is about a village in Uganda "that is caught between the old and the new beliefs -- between the witch-doctors and Christian priests" ("World Festival of Theatre," Tulane Drama Review, 17, iv [1973], p. 19; emphasis mine). To achieve "authenticity," "four different [Ugandan] languages are spoken in the play" (p. 20), much use was made of "proverbs and common Ugandan expressions," and the text "was written in a narrative form" while the action integrated "dances of purification, rebirth, celebration, and exorcism" using "traditional Ugandan instruments, rattles . . ." and the performers "wore Ugandan beaded shirts . . . animal skins . . . grass shirts . . . gourd helmets . . ." (p. 21; emphasis mine).

[11] Lewis Nkosi, "African Theatre," Africa: International Business, Economic and Political Monthly, 46 (1975), p. 55.

[12] Penina O. Muhando, "Traditional African Theatre with Special Reference to Tanzania" (1971; unpublished). Obtainable from the Department of Art, Music and Theatre Archives, University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

[13] A British director, internationally famous for his interest in conducting cultural experiments of all sorts, involving various cultures, especially "folk" cultures of the non-European peoples in search of new theatrical experiences and means of enhancing the theatre's powers of non-verbal communication.

[14] Peter Brook, "On Africa," an interview conducted by Michael Gibson, Tulane Drama Review, 17, iii (1973), p. 47.

[15] Ibid., p. 49.

[16] See also James Birihanze's "African Theatre: A Call for change," UMMA, 1, ii (1971), pp. 7 - 11. Birihanze, who has also been

a student in the Department of Art, Music and Theatre, makes a similar call for change of direction in African theatre. In connection with the call for change, also see Ezeokoli Vicki's "Introductory Course in African Theatre: A Sample Syllabus," Bulletin of Black Theatre, 5 (1974), pp. 4 - 6; and Samuel Asein's "African Drama in the African University," Bulletin of Black Theatre, 5 (1974), pp. 7-8.

[17] Mukotani Rugyendo, "Towards a Truly African Theatre," UMMA, 4, ii (1972), p. 66.

[18] Ibid., p. 67.

[19] These two Nigerian playwrights, especially Soyinka, have accumulated extensive experience in modern European Theatre. Wole Soyinka, for instance, worked for the Royal Court Theatre in London for a period of eighteen months, learning useful theatrical techniques which he later applied to his plays. The two are highly creative individuals (Wole Soyinka is a poet, a playwright, a novelist, a critic and essayist; J.P. Clark is a poet and playwright with four plays to his credit) who have done extensive research into their respective traditional ethnic cultures, Wole Soyinka among the Yoruba and J.P. Clark among the Ijaw. They have successfully blended the European and African aesthetic "worlds" in their works to give them an "international" or "universal" appeal, and have used such an approach to interpret the African traditional environment.

[20] Duro Ladipo has emerged from the popular theatre in Nigeria. His plays are in Yoruba and deal with historical themes derived from traditional legends, myths, and folklore. Although he has been exposed to influences of western theatre, contrary to Rugyendo's accusations, he makes full use of traditional culture and the theatrical forms in it.

[21] Like Ladipo, Obotunde Ijimere deals with subject matter from the traditional heritage, striving to express its quality through poetic language and action. Unlike Ladipo, though, he writes mainly in English. He comes from Nigeria like Ladipo.

[22] Mukotani Rugyendo, "Towards a Truly African Theatre," UMMA, 4, ii (1972), p. 65.

[23] Ibid., p. 70.

[24] Demas Nwoko, "Search for a New African Theatre," Presence Africaine, 75 (1970), p. 57.

[25] Among the cultural nationalists we should include Mukotani Rugyendo. His article "Towards a Truly African Theatre" shows him to be

an extremist. Penina Muhando can also be regarded as one. However, she combines her cultural nationalist sentiments with a lively concern for contemporary social problems, thus making her cultural nationalism purposeful. Moving into another artistic activity, we must mention Messrs Chinweizu, Onwuchewka Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike for their joint article, "Towards the Decolonisation of African Literature," Transition, 9, xlviii (1975), pp. 29-37. Campaigning for an indigenously based poetry, the three launch an attack on Nigerian poets, including Wole Soyinka, who use imported images as a backbone for their poetry. See also, in conjunction with the article above, Soyinka's rejoinder, "Neo-Tarzanism: The Poetics of Pseudo-Tradition," Transition, 9, xlviii (1975), pp. 38-44. The article is a seethingly sarcastic exposure of the superficiality of the three critics. The two articles read side by side provide a stimulating and dramatic discussion on the question of cultural nationalism. For further discussion, on the growth and nature of cultural nationalism in Africa and its influence on African theatre see Joel Adedeji's "Theatre and Ideology: An African Experience," Joliso: East African Journal of Literature and Society, 2, i (1974), pp. 72-82. Adedeji discusses the cultural nationalism in both the francophone and the anglophone theatre. He describes francophone theatre as being greatly influenced by "Negritude," a philosophy started by French-educated black intellectuals, which embraced traditional culture and blackness as a weapon against French colonialism and cultural chauvinism. The theatre inspired by Negritude, according to Adedeji, integrated the elements of song, music, and oral literature in an attempt to capture "lost" cultural identity. The anglophone theatre in West Africa, where Adedeji concentrates, was, according to him, influenced in a relatively marginal way, by a similar political-artistic ideology under the slogan of "African Personality" that called for the reassertion of the African shattered identity. The article is not profound enough in its analysis, but it does a good job of historically outlining the relationship between the currents of cultural nationalism in the African theatre and those of political nationalism which climaxed in independence for most of the African countries.

[26] Joachim Fiebach, "On the Social Function of Modern African Theatre," UMMA, 5, i (1975), pp. 159-171.

[27] Lewis Nkosi, Home and Exile (London: Longmans, 1965), pp. 108-14. Lewis Nkosi is a South African and theatre critic living in exile. He is the author of Rhythm of Violence (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), a liberal-pacifist play that deals with the racial tensions in South Africa.

[28] According to Fiebach in his article, Lewis Nkosi is a firm advocate for the establishment of African theatre. He rejects European theatre for being naturalistic, moving away from a poetic conception of action. He observes that since African theatrical heritage was essentially metaphorical, poetic and symbolic, "European" theatre with its petty naturalism would be unable to offer any important stimulation. He brands as hopeless the efforts to transplant in Africa the drawing room drama as a permanent form of theatre.

[29] Joachim Fiebach, "On the Social Function of Modern African Theatre and Brecht," *UMMA*, 5, i (1975), p. 160.

[30] Rugyendo places an uncritical emphasis on tradition, treating it as something automatically progressive and equates it with Marxism. A very stimulating article on the issue of traditional culture and Marxist aesthetics is written by Alfred Uçi, "The Place of Folklore and Its Role in Socialist Artistic Culture," *Albania Today*, 5, xxiv (1975), pp. 25-29.

[31] For an interesting discussion that exposes the naivety of regarding "traditionalism" and "modernism" as decisive factors determining social and cultural relations in society, see J.Z. Kronenfeld's "The 'Communalist' African and the 'Individualist' Westerner: Some Comments on Misleading Generalisations in Western Criticism of Soyinka and Achebe," *Research in African Literatures*, 6, i (1975), pp. 199-26. The author convincingly argues that the tradition/modern conflict is a complex one that needs to be treated within a larger ideological context.

[32] "Third World" is a term that is supposed to describe countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Although many people are not aware, it is a term that is based on reactionary and incorrect claims that the world is divided into three socio-economic "worlds." Accordingly, the "first world" consists of the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, which have ambitions to dominate the world. The "second world" allegedly consists of lesser imperialist countries like Britain, Japan and Canada, and the revisionist countries of Eastern Europe. These countries, according to the theory, are victims of the superpowers rather than oppressor imperialist and social imperialist nations. The theory further claims that the "second world" can ally with the "third world," its "fellow sufferer" (much like a lamb can lie with a wolf!) to liberate the world from the imperialism of the superpowers. Such a division of the world is based on distortion of the reality about the international class relations, by which the world is perceived, not along class lines, but along racial lines leading to a false impression that what the "third world" suffers from is not class oppression by international capitalism but only racial and cultural oppression by other races.

For further clarification on this question, see Stephen Arnold's "Symbolism and Socialist Realism: Methodologies and Jacques Roumain's *Les Gouverneurs de la rosée*," *African Studies Association Papers 1978* (Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts); see especially pp. 12-15.

[33] The festival was attended by "Third World" countries such as South Korea, Nigeria, India, Pakistan, and by "Second World" countries like France and Belgium, and by "Communist" countries like the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

[34] Cherif Khaznadar, "Tendencies and Prospects for Third World Theatre," Tulane Drama Review, 17, iv (1975), p. 35.

[35] Bakary Traore, The Black African Theatre and Its Social Function, trans. by Dapo Adelugba (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1972).

[36] Anthony Graham-White, The Drama of Black Africa (New York: Samuel French Inc., 1974). One other book worth mentioning is by Lee Warren, The Theatre of Africa (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1975). Warren's book is by no means a treasure house. It lacks a deep analysis and intimate knowledge of African theatre. In his views and observations, he treads the familiar path and avoids disturbing waves by handling any controversial issues. The book however succeeds in giving a favourable impression of African theatre to people who have no prior knowledge of it.

[37] L'Ecole William Ponty was sponsored by the French administration to provide leaders in all fields including that of drama. Students collected material from customs and legends of their communities when they were on holiday and on returning to school they discussed how the material could be used with the maximum theatrical effect. The plays performed integrated songs from the vernacular and traditional dances, de-emphasizing the use of dialogue. The school had a broad influence in West Africa.

Keita Fodeba, a graduate of l'Ecole William Ponty, made the first attempt to establish a professional African theatre company, founding the Théâtre africain in 1949. Modelling himself upon the West African griots (professional storytellers) Fodeba combined in his theatre, song and dance. The theatre also performed plays. Fodeba's troupe was immensely influential, providing a model for many folklore troupes that were developed by the African nations after independence.

[38] The following discussion could also be extended to include Botswana, also recently "independent" from British rule. Special conditions prevailing there, however, are too complex to go into here. The curious reader might consult Ross Kidd and Martin Byram's Popular Theatre: A Technique for Participatory Research (Toronto: Participatory Research Project, 1978).

Malawi, having remained the most direclty tied to Britain (and South Africa) has the least to offer in significant experimentation, and therefore will be ignored here. Anyone acquainted with Malawi might however, keep it in mind as a model eschewed by those discussed below; i.e., "who needs Shakespeare?" is frequently asked.

[39] Ngugi wa Thiong'o is an author of several novels, plays including The Trial of Dedan Kimathi (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1977). The play deals with a historical figure in Kenya, Dedan Kimathi,

a leader in the freedom fighting movement against British colonialism. The play depicts him as a hero who dies for championing the cause of the oppressed masses of Kenya.

[40] The title of the play, which is in Kikuyu, means "I Will Marry When I Want." It was co-authored by Ngugi wa Mirii and the villagers of Kamirtho. I have scepticism about the claims that the play is "revolutionary", which comes in part from a scholarly attitude and in part from having heard Ngugi wa Mirii speak recently in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. He is a reformist, not a revolutionary.

[41] "Quiet Revolution in Kenyan Theatre," Africa: An International Business, Economic and Political Monthly, 78 (1978), p. 72. Ngugi's leadership in this "Quiet Revolution" has caused the Kenyan government to detain him since Christmas, 1977. He was released on 12 December, 1978.

[42] Ibid., p. 72.

[43] The play Dedan Kimathi and the novel Petals of Blood (London: Heinemann, 1977), are the most critical of the Kenyan bourgeoisie.

[44] M.A. Ruchoya, "Drama in East Africa," Busara, 3, i, (1970), p. 45.

[45] This chauvinist tendency by Kenyan scholars to call Kenyan products East African, while ignoring cultural products of their neighbours, is a main theme in two articles by Stephen Arnold, "Popular Literature in Tanzania in Popular Perspective," African Literature Association Archives (French Department: Pennsylvania State University, 1978), and "The History of Tanzanian Literature in English," History of African Literatures in European Languages (in press), ed. Albert Gerard.

[46] M.N. Ruchoya, "Drama in East Africa," Busara, 3, i (1970), p. 47.

[47] Ebrahim Hussein, "The Beginnings of Imported Theatre in Tanzanian Urban Centres," Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe, 23 (1974), p. 405.

[48] Ibid., p. 405.

[49] The British took over the colonial administration of Tanganyika (Tanzania) in 1920 following the First World War defeat of Germany, the previous colonial power in Tanganyika.

[50] Ibid., p. 405. (All the plays mentioned in the quote are contained in Seven One Act Plays, ed. A.J. Emerson; London: Longmans, 1953).

[51] Ibid., p. 405.

[52] Robert Serumaga, "Uganda's Experimental Theatre," African Arts, 3, iii (1970), p. 53. Since Idi Amin came to power in 1972, little is known outside Uganda about its theatre; prior to 1972, Uganda was the centre of neo-colonial culture in East Africa because it was there that the British established the first university, Makerere.

[53] For an idea of the type of theatre Serumaga has taken up lately, see note 10.

[54] Janet Johnson, "Theatre Limited," African Arts, 3, iii (1970), p. 54.

[55] Ibid., p. 55.

[56] Michael Etherton is an example of the well-intentioned expatriate who has hopes of achieving something positive in Africa, one who can be considered a liberal progressive. For his pains he was kicked out of Zambia in 1971 following university student unrest. He was suspected of having supportive links with the militant elements in the student body.

[57] Michael Etherton, "Zambia -- Popular Theatre," New Theatre Magazine, 12, ii (1972), p. 20). For more information on and further analysis of Chickwakwa Theatre and theatre in Zambia in general see Etherton's other article "Indigenous Performances in Zambia," and David Pownall's "European and African Influences in Zambian Theatre," both in Theatre Quarterly (London), 3, x (1973), pp. 44-46 and 49-53, respectively.

[58] Ferdinand Oyono, Houseboy, trans. John Reed (London: Heinemann, 1966). Adapted by Michael into a play, "Houseboy," Five African Plays, ed. Cosmo Pieterse (London: Heinemann, 1972).

[59] Lusaka is the capital of Zambia.

[60] "Humanism"is a combination of Christian idealism and the oft-mentioned African traditional communal values, that masks the petty bourgeois ideology of the ruling class.

[61] Michael Etherton, "Zambia -- Popular Theatre," Theatre Quarterly (London), 3, x (1973), p.21.

[62] A political philosophy born out of Arusha Declaration, it employs an idealist approach in perceiving social reality and in transforming it. Its idealism can be summarised by President Nyerere's statement, "Socialism is an attitude of mind." Advocating social and political reforms rather than revolutionary changes, Ujamaa is meant to change consciousness, to change individual moral attitudes as a means of changing society.

[63] John Pepper Clark, Ozidi (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[64] Sarif R. Easmon, The New Patriots (London: Longmans, 1965).

[65] Pat Amady, Yon Kon, in Obasai and Other Plays (London: Heinemann, 1971).

[66] Comic plays which have been, after the Arusha Declaration, used to mount political satire.

[67] Poetic drama in which issues are discussed in a dramatic debate that presents a simple conflict between the good and the bad moral values, between vice and virtue. Virtue always wins.

[68] Ebrahim Hussein, Kinjeketile (London: Oxford University Press, 1969). The play deals with the Maji Maji Resistance against German colonialism which united a number of ethnic groups in Southern Tanzania in a common cause. It was the first time that resistance against colonialism was waged on an inter-ethnic level. The term Maji Maji (literally meaning "Water Water"), refers to medicinal water by Kinjeketile, a seer who claimed that the water would provide protection against German bullets. Belief in the water proved to be disastrous.

[69] Penina Muhando, Hatia (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1974). Hatia, which is based on the problem of unwed mothers will be discussed at length in Chapter IV.

[70] Penina Muhando, "Traditional African Theatre with Special Reference to Tanzania" (University of Dar-es-Salaam: Department of Art, Music and Theatre Archives, 1971), p. 1.

[71] Another notable example of practical student involvement is a project by second year students in 1973, involving Primary School pupils in a production of Kijiji Cha Kazamkanda (The Village of Kazamkanda), an unpublished play glorifying the virtues of Tanzanian socialism. An analysis of the project is given in Jesse Mollel's paper "Ideological Content in Tanzanian Theatre: Reflections on Two Recent Productions," delivered to the African Literature Association meeting in Madison,

Wisconsin, March 1977, available from African Literature Association 1977 Archives, ed. Thomas Hale (University Park: French Department, 1977).

[72] Farouk Topan and John Cathew, "Drama in Tanzanian Schools," Tanzania Notes and Records, 70 (1969), pp. 57-61.

[73] Saifu Kiango, "Maendeleo ya Fasihi ya Kiswahili Upande wa Michezo ya Kuigiza," Kiswahili, 43, ii (1973), pp. 89-97.

[74] Negligence of local drama is one of the issues taken up in the introduction of E. Hussein's "An Annotated Bibliography of Swahili Theatre," Swahili, 39 i/ii (1969), pp. 49-60. Hussein urges the need to record unwritten drama in particular and the local theatre scene in general because to him, "A building without any concrete foundation cannot stand. A theatre that has no foundation of its own cannot stand" (p. 51).

[75] In future, theatre critics in Tanzania will have to devote much more effort on criticism of written plays which are coming out in a tremendous quantity, with a view to stimulating their production.

[76] Bob Leshoai, "Tanzania's Socialist Theatre," New Theatre Magazine, 12, ii (1972), p. 22.

[77] Ibid., p. 22.

[78] Ibid., p. 23.

[79] Ngalimecha Ngahyoma, Kijiji Chetu (Dar-es-Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1975).

[80] K.K. Kahigi and A.A. Ngemera, Mwanzo wa Tufani (Dar-es-Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1975).

[81] This and all following quotes are, unless otherwise indicated, from an interview conducted by Jesse Mollel in August, 1978.

[82] Penina Muhando na Ndyanao Balisidya, Fasihi na Sanaa za Maonyeshi (Literature and Theatre), (Dar-es-Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1976), p. 22.

[83] Interview conducted by Jesse Mollel in August, 1978.

[84] Penina Muhando na Ndyanao Balisidya, Fasihi na Sanaa za Maonyesho.

[85] Ibid., p. 30.

[86] The review is contained on the backcover of the book.

[87] For a good example of the criticism that doubts the existence of traditional African theatre, see E.T. Kirby, "Indigenous African Theatre," *Tulane Drama Review*, 18, iv (1974), pp. 22-23. Without knowledge and experience in African traditional culture, Kirby, using a Eurocentric definition, draws the conclusion that theatre proper (i.e. dignified theatre of the western type) does not exist in traditional Africa, that "Drama in the *accepted sense of the term* as a situational interaction expressed in *dialogue between characters*, is found in a number of rudimentary forms in simple comedies and in plays" (p. 22; emphasis mine). This echoes the ethnocentrism of Ruth Finnegan: "With a few possible exceptions, there is no tradition in Africa of artistic performances which include all the elements which might be demanded in a *strict definition of drama* -- or at least *not with the emphasis to which we are accustomed*" (emphasis mine; *Oral Literature in Africa* [London: Oxford University Press, 1970], p. 516).

[88] Penina Muhando na Ndanao Balisidya, *Fasihi na Sanaa za Maonyesho* (Dar-es-Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1976), p. 21.

[89] Ibid., p. 33.

[90] *Heshima Yangu* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1974).

[91] *Tambueni Haki Zetu* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1973).

[92] *Pambo* (Nairobi: Foundations Books Limited, 1975).

[93] "Talaka Si Mke Wangu," contained in *Uandishi Tanzania: Michezo ya Kuigiza* (Creative Writing in Tanzania: Plays), ed. J. Mbonde (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1977).

[94] Louis Mbughuni, "Old and New Drama from East Africa: A Review of the works of Four Dramatists, Rebecca Njau, Ebrahim Hussein, Penina Muhando and Ngugi," *African Literature Today*, 8 (1976), pp. 85-98.

[95] Githae Mugo, "Plays in Swahili: Gerishon Ngugi, Penina Muhando and Ebrahim Hussein," *African Literature Today*, 8 (1976), pp. 137-41.

[96] F.E.M.K. Senkoro, "Mwamko wa Kisiasa Katika Fasihi" (Political Awareness in Literature), *UMMA*, 5, i (1975), pp. 51-61.

[97] This is probably a trait drawn from traditional African folktales rather than from imported dramatic inspiration. Folktale characters are ethically portrayed as types, and rarely as individuating characteristics. And contrast is a major device in the tales.

[98] Penina Muhando, "Modern African Theatre with Special Emphasis on East Africa."

[99] Ibid., pp. 1-2.

[100] Wole Soyinka, Myth, Literature and the African Worldview, op.cit., p. 44.

[101] For discussion on the social and political significance of Hatia, see Jesse Mollel and Stephen Arnold's "Introduction to the Drama of Penina Muhando: The Theme of Wapotovu na Kuwarudi" (Deviants and Rehabilitation). African Studies Association Papers (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University, 1978).

[102] The play's criticism of some Ujamaa policies was found to be too blunt and was censored. The abrupt departure of the play from circulation has prompted rumours that it has been found to be politically intolerable and banned.

[103] Chama cha Mapinduzi was formed in February, 1977. It is a union of Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), the ruling party in Tanzania mainland which won independence from the British, and Afro-Shirazi Party, the former ruling party in Zanzibar which led the 1964 revolution to overthrow Arab rule on the island.

[104] Jesse Mollel and Stephen Arnold, "Introduction to the Drama of Penina Muhando: The Theme of Wapotovu na Kuwarudi" (Deviants and Rehabilitation), op cit., note 101 above.

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